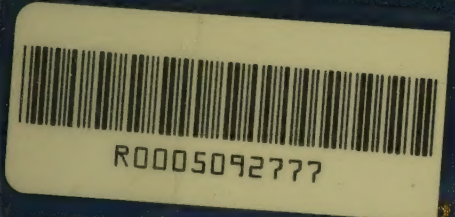
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# There Is Another Heaven

Robert Nathan

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# There Is Another Heaven

*Books by*

ROBERT NATHAN

*Novels:*

PETER KINDRED

AUTUMN

THE PUPPET MASTER

JONAH

THE FIDDLER IN BARLY

THE WOODCUTTER'S HOUSE

THE BISHOP'S WIFE

*Verse:*

YOUTH GROWS OLD

A CEDAR BOX

# There Is Another Heaven

*By*

Robert Nathan

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To

SUSAN, AS TRUSTEE

*"Then shall I see, and hear, and know,*
*All I desired or wished below;*
*And every power find sweet employ*
*In that eternal world of joy.*
*Amen."*

HYMN No. 150

# There Is Another Heaven

## CHAPTER 1

THE Styx lay silent. No oar disturbed the serenity of those bitter waters, on whose dark bosom lilies and weeds floated without movement. Charon's skiff, half drawn up on land, waited in vain; and slowly rotted. Its master slept; and dreams of past glories caused him to smile.

On the other hand, the River Jordan was crowded with barges, skiffs, dingies, and ferries. A clear wind ruffled the waters which bore with joy a never-ending procession of passengers between shore and shore. In formidable numbers men, women, and children gathered on the bank, waiting to be taken over. The Eternal City received them; there was room for them all. White, shining, and august, it

rose like a dream beyond the water which flowed about its walls.

George Herman Wutheridge, one-time Professor of Semitic Languages at the University, had not yet arrived at the river; he was still a full day's journey away. He walked without care; his old bones forgot to creak; and a delicious breeze penetrated his beard. Immortal flowers blossomed along the path, from which the bees drew pollen with a faint bumbling hum. One of them, alighting for a moment on his hand, rested its wings while he examined it without fear. "This is not," he said to himself, "a bee of Hymettus, whose honey, allowed to ferment, filled the heads of the ancients with glory, and their bodies with ardor. Rather, this workaday little fellow reminds me of the bees at home, from whose hives came a palatable syrup, proper for spreading on bread, and enjoyed by the children."

"Look out," said a voice at his elbow; "or he'll sting you."

Professor Wutheridge looked gently around. "Do you think so?" he asked the young man whom he now saw walking at his side. And he added in a tone of surprise,

"Why should he do such a thing?"

The youth, who appeared to be about eighteen years old, shrugged his thin shoulders. "My mother always taught me to be afraid of bees," he explained.

His pale face seemed drawn in an expression of anxiety. "After all," he said apologetically, "they do have a sting."

Professor Wutheridge regarded him thoughtfully. "Your mother," he remarked, "whoever she may have been, seems to have seen the hindmost part first. My own mother, whom I hope soon to see, was just the reverse, and saw only the good in everything. She died when I

was a child, and I do not remember her very well. Perhaps I am wrong in attributing to her the virtues which I used to find in my favorite heroines of antiquity, the mischievous Thetis, the lovely Seti, the great-hearted Naomi, and the wise Bath-sheba, mother of Solomon."

The young man laid his hand on Professor Wutheridge's arm, as though to stop him. "My mother," he declared, and his voice shook with joy, "was a very religious woman. She was the head of our church at home, and of many other things besides. She was known everywhere. Perhaps you have heard of her." And he added simply, as though that explained everything, "Her name was Emma Meiggs."

The professor of Semitic languages gazed long and curiously at this youth whose mother had often figured in the newspapers. "Yes," he said at last, "I have heard of your mother. I did not know that she had a son. She was a

great figure: I wish I could say that I had sympathized more fully with her aims. So she, too, is before me . . . that is to say, she is there, where I am going. . . ."

And he heaved a deep sigh.

"Perhaps," he said, "I have lived too much in the past to appreciate the needs of the present. In your mother's voice, uplifted in prophetic utterances, it has often seemed to me that I heard the lamentations of Jeremiah, of Ezekiel, and of all the prophets from Moses to Malachi."

"Yes, that has been said of her," replied young Meiggs with pride.

"I would not like it said of me," declared the professor. "I prefer to speak of joy, like the Greeks. What—has God learned nothing in three thousand years?"

"My mother had many trials," said the young man, without noticing this interruption, "which

she met like a saint. Father was one of them. She used to pray for him every night; she prayed that he'd be saved. He went first; then mother; and then me. We'll all meet soon; that is, unless he wasn't saved after all. But I guess he was; I guess he was."

Then it was the young man's turn to sigh. He walked along thoughtfully, his pale face drawn in a puzzled frown. The light of heaven shone on the path, the bees sang, the air seemed perfumed with a thousand blossoms. "There wasn't much use living when mother went," he said at last. "She always took care of me. She took care of everything."

The professor nodded his head sympathetically. "I know," he said. "I lost my parents when I was a child. And all my life I had to take care of myself. It must be very fine to be taken care of. That is what I look forward to most of all, when I think of meeting my mother again. . . .

"Still," he added a moment later, "I would not like to be told what to do and what not to do. And your mother, as I remember her on earth, spent much of her time telling her neighbors what was right and what was wrong."

"They needed telling," broke in Mr. Meiggs.

"I dare say," agreed the professor, "I dare say. And I imagine most people prefer it, as a matter of fact, to making out for themselves. Still, one cannot study the past without coming to the conclusion that right and wrong have often changed places, depending sometimes upon the climate, sometimes on political necessity, but more often on the simplest rules of self-preservation, in which the diet also plays a large part."

"My mother," said young Mr. Meiggs dreamily, "saved many souls by her work. She took sin away from people; she helped pass laws to make them good. And she's waiting for

me now; she knows I'm coming. She'll put out her arms to me, and I'll go into them, and she'll hold me tight."

And his young eyes filled with happy tears.

"You can imagine that I am excited," he said simply.

"Yes," agreed the professor, "that will be fine. I cannot believe that my mother will be waiting for me; for one thing, she has no idea of what I look like. When she left me, I was still very young, and I gave promise then of good looks which the years have failed to confirm. Nor have I anyone else to look forward to meeting, for my life was a simple and lonely one. I found happiness in my work; I was married only to my studies. Perhaps I was fortunate, since in that case, I am taking my wife along with me."

"I too," said the young man, "am as pure as the day I was born."

By this time they had approached the bank of the river and saw before them the great city, over whose domes and towers light seemed to hover like a cloud. The air all about them throbbed with faint music and bells; Mr. Meiggs thought that he could distinguish the tunes of *Old Faithful* and *Rock of Ages;* while the professor listened enraptured to the sound of harps. The flowery meadow air gave way to the cool smell of water, mingled with an unmistakable odor of incense. They stood a moment in silence, reverently gazing; after which the professor exclaimed in tones of awe and delight: "There is the great city, our last and eternal home. Now may sorrow and I be forever parted, at this river into whose moving waters all burdens, however weary, must fall."

Young Mr. Meiggs said nothing. However, at that moment a third voice at the professor's elbow caused him to look around with a friend-

ly smile. A short, stout man was standing beside him, wearing upon his face an expression of concern.

"Is that the city?" asked the man.

"It is," replied the professor.

"I heard you say that here is where all burdens fall," continued the stranger. "Excuse me: I have many."

And he gave a groan.

"My name," he said, "is Lewis, born Levy. It has been quite a struggle for me to get here. The going was not easy. So there it is, the city. My, my.

"What a sight."

And as neither the professor nor Mr. Meiggs could think of anything to say, he added,

"Well, tell me: will I be welcome there? What do you think?"

Young Mr. Meiggs looked at him critically. "Were you baptized?" he asked.

"I was," said Mr. Lewis.

"Then," said Mr. Meiggs, "I should expect so."

Mr. Lewis nodded his head in agreement. "I have been a good churchman," he said. "I used to loan my pictures to the charities. On Sundays my house was filled with important people, looking at my collection."

"Ah," said the professor.

"Perhaps," Mr. Lewis continued, "they'll keep me out anyway. What do you think?"

And he peered anxiously at the professor, who gazed quietly back at him.

"The city you see before you," said the professor, "is comparatively modern. Younger than Thebes, or even Jerusalem, it is a colony of that mother city which was discovered a little less than two thousand years ago by slaves whose Roman masters, on their way to the Elysian Fields, left them to find whatever home

for their troubled souls they could. It is not the paradise of Egypt, shared by the gods and the Pharaohs; it is not Eblis, nor Nirvana; it is not even the Abode of the Blessed of the Rabbi Eliezer. Indeed, I am curious to see just what it is. . . . I imagine we shall find it a not unfamiliar place. As to whether or not you will be welcome there, I cannot say, although I do not see how, if you have been baptized and have led a Christian life, you can very well be kept out."

"It's not exactly being kept out that bothers me," said Mr. Lewis, "so much as being let in, and then being made to feel out. When I'm out, I'm out; but when I'm in and at the same time out, it makes me dizzy."

He shook his head gloomily. "It's a long time since I was welcome anywhere," he said.

"I am sure that my mother will welcome you," declared young Mr. Meiggs.

Mr. Lewis looked at him with an expression of hope. "Has she much influence?" he asked.

"My mother is Emma Meiggs," said the young man.

"Ah," said Mr. Lewis despondently; "well . . . I'm glad to have met you."

And as the boat which was to take them over at that moment approached the land, he seized him by the hand, shook it briefly, and hurried to the shore.

A few moments later George Henry Wutheridge, Professor of Semitic Languages at the University, William Wilberforce Meiggs, and Mr. Lewis, born Levy, were on their way across Jordan.

## CHAPTER 2

"THERE's mother," exclaimed William Meiggs as the boat drew near the shore; and he began to wave furiously. "Mother," he cried. But presently his arm dropped to his side, and an expression of embarrassment and uncertainty crossed his face. It was not his mother after all.

Nor was she anywhere to be seen among the crowds of people who were waiting to greet the newcomers. He looked around at the strange faces beaming with welcome, at first eagerly, then anxiously, and at last in a sort of panic. Where was she? What could have happened? Had he made some mistake? Wasn't he expected?

All about him people were embracing with tears of joy and cries of rapture. But William

stood silent, gazing around him with a frightened smile, and eyes which saw nothing. It was like one of childhood's agonies over again, to be left out of other folks' welcome. It was like being at a Christmas tree where there was no gift for him; like the Sunday-school picnic when no one wanted to play with him . . . like not being asked to dance at the church sociable, when it was the girls' turn, though he was dressed in his best. . . .

He felt like weeping. On earth or in heaven William Meiggs was lost without his mother.

Perhaps the most unbearable part of it all was its not being a surprise, really—deep down. How many times as a child had he stood with the same fixed smile, trying not to let others see how miserable he felt? It was always the same, nothing ever turned out as he hoped it would; something always . . . usually . . . went wrong.

His mother would come sooner or later, of

course: she always did; but usually . . . never . . . it was never sooner. It was true: never, oh, never sooner. He could say it to himself at last—now that he was there. . . .

He took a deep breath, and turning blindly to the first white-robed figure he saw, "Excuse me, sir," he said, "could you tell me . . . I'm a stranger here, . . . is Mrs. Meiggs? . . . Or perhaps where she lives?"

The stranger replied in a voice full of sweetness: "Mrs. Meiggs lives just down that street, four houses from the second turning, on the left side."

"She's not here," said William apologetically.

"No," agreed the stranger, "she's not."

"I suppose she's home," said William.

But the stranger shook his head. "Mrs. Meiggs is presiding at a meeting," he answered, "to arrange for the observance of Mother's Day."

"Oh," said William. And he added in a small voice, "I'm her son."

The stranger smiled. "How happy she will be to see you again," he remarked.

"Yes," said William. And giving a great swallow, he started up the street to his mother's house.

But as he drew near the second turning to the left, his spirits began to rise, and he found himself smiling. "At least," he thought, "she hasn't changed any." And this reflection comforted him.

He found his mother's house without difficulty. It was a simple dwelling in no way different from the others all about it: a narrow house in a row of narrow houses, of white material, scrupulously clean, with a bow window and a porch. In the small garden or yard before the door a few flowers of paradise bloomed: lilies, immortelles in pots, and a small pomegranate tree. On either side, as far as

he could see, the houses stood exactly alike, an orderly regiment, endless, the same, narrow, white, and respectable.

As he turned in at the gate, he saw that his father was standing in the doorway; and although he had secretly expected it, his heart sank. However, he went up to him, and kissed him dutifully on the cheek, to one side of the long, drooping mustache.

"Well, father," he said, "here I am again."

"So I see," said Mr. Meiggs. And he gazed without enthusiasm at his son.

"I was told you'd be along one of these days," he remarked, "but it didn't seem reasonable, you being so young: I figured we'd be left in peace a while yet." He waved his hand toward the house. "Make yourself to home," he said; "there's not much room, but I expect your mother'll find a place to put you; she always did."

Stepping aside to allow him to pass, Mr. Meiggs followed his son into the house.

"It looks sort of familiar," said William timidly, gazing about him at the horsehair sofa, the worsted mottoes hung on the wall, the one low rocking-chair, the table with its red and white checked cloth.

"Why not?" asked Mr. Meiggs. "It's our home. Our heavenly mansion." And he added,

"Your mother will be back from meeting soon. She said give you her love, and you'll find crackers and milk in the kitchen if you're hungry."

"I'm not hungry, thanks," said William.

Mr. Meiggs moved uncomfortably. "Did you have a good crossing?" he asked after a silence.

"It wasn't so bad," William replied politely. "There were a lot of people coming over, and I came with them."

He ventured nothing further, and the conversation languished. In the silence father and son exchanged uneasy glances. "Now," thought Mr. Meiggs, "I suppose I'll play second fiddle, like I used to."

And pulling out his mustaches with a fierce expression, he cleared his throat. "Herrum," he said.

William cowered unhappily in his chair. But just at that moment he heard a step on the porch, and a second later Emma Meiggs herself came through the door.

"William," she exclaimed.

Crossing the room with deliberate strides as he rose flushing with joy from his chair, she folded him in her stout arms, and kissed him on the cheek. Then she held him out to look at.

"What a big boy you've got to be," she cried.

She smoothed the hair down across his forehead in the way he remembered. "Well,

now, tell me," she said: "are you all right?"

"Never better, mother," replied William.

"I'm glad to hear it," said Mrs. Meiggs. "Well, well, and now you're here. Dearie me. Hm . . . a grown son. Well . . .

"How is everything at home?"

"Your work is going on, mother," said William proudly. "There's a statue of you in front of the State House."

"No," said Mrs. Meiggs, full of wonder.

"And there's laws called after you," William hurried on, "and a book written about you."

"A statue," said Mrs. Meiggs dreamily: "Well, now . . . Did you hear that Henry? There's a statue of me at home." She turned back to her son again. "What's it like?" she demanded. "Is it a likeness?"

Lifting her chin, she gazed nobly over his head.

William blushed. "It looked like you," he admitted, "a little. But then some people put paint on it, and broke off the nose, and . . . and . . ."

"People?" demanded Mrs. Meiggs indignantly. "Do you call that people?"

"They were sent to jail," mumbled William unhappily; "that is, some of them."

"They'd ought to be hung," exclaimed Mrs. Meiggs.

"Well, I never . . . Did you hear that, Henry?"

"Yes," said Mr. Meiggs sourly, "I heard it."

"They'd ought to be tarred and feathered," cried Mrs. Meiggs.

"Spoiling a good statue that way."

"Never mind, Emma," said her husband soothingly. "That's all gone by for you now."

"That's true," she admitted. She threw him

a grateful smile. "I've got higher things to think of," she declared happily.

She continued in tones of enthusiasm, "Just imagine—everyone is right minded here, working for the truth and the light. To-day I brought them Mother's Day. I could be happy here forever."

She went to the cupboard, and took out a stone jar of milk, a crock of honey, and some bread. "Come," she said, "let's have a bite together, to welcome my son. This is simple food, William; we live simply here."

Mr. Meiggs gave his mustache a hopeful pull. "Perhaps, Emma," he said, "seeing as how this is a welcome, you might say, and what with having William back with us so early, so much earlier than we had a right to expect, it might not be out of place to celebrate the occasion with a glass or two . . ."

"Henry," said Mrs. Meiggs.

Closing his eyes, Henry took up the beaker of milk. "Ah," he said.

"Yes," murmured Mrs. Meiggs, her mouth full of honey, "I could be happy here forever."

William smiled at her across the table. He had never seen her so peaceful, so noble, so sure and safe, so happy, so uplifted. Except, of course, for that moment about the statue. But that was his fault; he shouldn't have spoken of it. "Mother," he whispered, putting his hand out timidly to touch her, "I'm glad I'm here."

"I'm sure of it, my son," said Emma.

"We're very glad to have you."

"You look much better, mother," said William, "than you used."

Mr. Meiggs winked one eye at him. "Your mother's a good-looking woman," he declared. And leaning over, he pressed a gallant kiss upon her cheek.

"Henry," exclaimed Mrs. Meiggs faintly: "in front of the child."

" 'Twas purely meant, my dear," said Henry; "in loving kindness."

"I know," said Emma, patting his hand. Nevertheless, she was obscurely troubled, not so much for the kiss, which was no more than the custom in their new home, as for William, who was, after all, not used to it.

"Finish your milk, William," she said a little sharply, "and let's get on."

William said nothing; he turned back to his honey, from which the sweetness had unaccountably departed.

The rest of the meal was eaten in silence. When the last crumb was gone, Emma took her son to his room, furnished as it had been at home with a low cot, a motto, and a wooden chair. Seated together on the edge of the cot, she drew him close to her, then held him away and looked at him with tender anxiety.

"William," she said; "tell me: have you been a good boy?"

"Yes, mother," said William.

"All the time?"

"All the time, mother."

She put her arm around him, his head sank against her shoulder. Through the little bedroom window drifted the odors of paradise, the perfume of lilies, the strange scent of myrrh, of cinnamon; the cries of children at play, happy, without envy, cut through the distant sound of music, of voices marvelously sweet mingled in simple glees. William let his head sink lower and lower; an unexpected weariness assailed him, sadness stole through his heart. Why should he be sad? . . . He had thought sorrow ended forever, the heavy sweet sorrow of youth, without reason, without hope; now that he was home again, now that he was here where he had longed with all his heart to be, could he be anything but happy, could he feel anything but joy?

And as the heavenly day wore on, he wept, quietly, without knowing why, while his mother, with her arm around him and an expression of ineffable satisfaction on her face, rocked slowly up and down.

## CHAPTER 3

PROFESSOR WUTHERIDGE stepped off the boat in an active manner, and with the liveliest curiosity. "How often," he thought, "have I longed to behold those ancient cities where history began. And here I am in a city stranger than Babylon, though not as old as Rome. Dear me." And making use of a trick taught him by the explorer Beebe, he closed his eyes in order to imagine himself back at his desk in the University. "Now," he thought, "I have only to remember how I used to dream of all this; and when I open my eyes I shall feel the full impact of my situation."

But before he could look about, a pair of soft arms were thrown around him, and he felt himself embraced in a vigorous manner. "George,"

said a voice; and he opened his eyes upon the very last thing he had expected to see—a young woman. Her face shone with mischief and joy, her auburn hair fell in a curl upon her neck; her brown eyes smiled into his, and her mouth was still framed in a kiss.

"Mother," he exclaimed.

"My son," she replied. At these words her whole being seemed to break into ripples of laughter. "My darling white-headed child."

Professor Wutheridge looked accusingly at this young woman whom he remembered, but only faintly, from his childhood. "You did it to surprise me," he said.

"I did," she admitted. "And really—when you closed your eyes, it was too heavenly altogether. Your face, my darling—so serious. Oh, my stars."

Overcome with mirth, she leaned against him, her cheek close to his coat. Professor

Wutheridge cleared his throat; he looked around him with embarrassment. "Mother," he said loudly, in order to explain the situation to some fellow travelers who were passing by.

Mrs. Wutheridge actually giggled. "Yes, my child," she replied.

"Is father here?" asked the professor.

"Your father," declared Mrs. Wutheridge, "is at home, pacing the floor. The arrival of a son has been almost too much for him; he would be here, but diffidence and terror control his actions at the moment. He is being comforted by your Uncle Ludwig, who is also in a state."

"My Uncle Ludwig?" asked the professor with surprise. "I was not aware . . ."

"He's not your uncle, goose," exclaimed Mrs. Wutheridge: "but we have to call him something."

"Oh," said the professor. "Um," said he.

"Nonsense," replied Mrs. Wutheridge impa-

tiently; "it's not oh and um at all. Remember where you are."

The professor looked at his mother with an appreciative smile. "I am glad you reminded me," he said. "I confess, I feel an overwhelming curiosity about all this. When you saw me just now with my eyes closed, I was about to give myself a surprise, in a manner of speaking. It is an old trick, to close your eyes, and imagine yourself back where you came from. Then when you open them again, you see everything as though for the first time, with the further advantage of knowing where to look for it. William Beebe, the explorer . . ."

"Gracious," said Mrs. Wutheridge; "I thought you were dreaming of your wife. And it was Mr. Beebe. . . ."

"My wife?" said the professor; "I have no wife."

"No wife?" cried his mother in consternation.

"No wife at all? Then you are a bachelor."

"I am," said the professor.

"Without experience," continued his mother.

"How else would I be here?" asked the professor simply.

"I have never loved."

Mrs. Wutheridge put her hand to her mouth shaped in a round letter of dismay.

"Oh," she exclaimed.

"Oh, my.

"Oh, my poor boy."

"I see no reason to complain," said the professor gallantly, "of a mode of living which has numbered me among the saved, and also brought me back to you, madam, for the rest of eternity."

She smiled, and reaching out, took hold of his hand. "That was pretty," she said. "Heaven knows where you learnt it.

"But come along: we mustn't prolong your

father's anxiety beyond a reasonable limit."

So saying, hand in hand, the white-bearded professor and the young woman with dancing eyes started up the street.

"This is not the sort of city I expected to find," said the professor, as his glance encountered row after row of houses all alike, "although I suppose if I had stopped to think I would have realized that the spiritual sons of Comstock, of Moody, and of William Bryan have always held before their eyes the goal of respectable uniformity. Nor is anything else conceivable to a man of democratic ideals and sound Protestant doctrine. Perhaps I miss a little the spaciousness of the Abode of the Blessed of the medieval rabbis, where the rooms alone were one hundred thousand miles wide; or it is possible that our modern architecture at home had prepared me for the pyramids and cubes of Babylon and Egypt."

"To think," said Mrs. Wutheridge admiringly, "that you are a child of mine. Babylon indeed. You sound like a scholar. Well, are you? Tell me the truth."

"For forty years," said the professor, "I was Lanyarde Professor of Semitic Languages at the University."

"Semitic Languages," exclaimed Mrs. Wutheridge. "My dear—was that necessary?"

"Thirty-nine books of the Old Testament," replied the professor inexorably, "including Genesis, Exodus, and Deuteronomy, were first written in Hebrew."

"No," said Mrs. Wutheridge.

"Fancy that.

"Is it generally known?"

"On the other hand," continued the professor, "a gentleman of Hebraic extraction whom I met on the way assured me that the Jews are not as a rule welcome at home, where they con-

trol most of the banks and markets, and contribute largely to the cathedrals."

"I should hope not," said Mrs. Wutheridge; "nor here, neither."

Then it was the professor's turn to be distressed. "In that case," he thought, "how extremely unfortunate for Mr. Lewis."

However, at this moment they came opposite a house like all the others, yet in a way different. For one thing, the windows were of lavender glass, behind which could be seen long curtains of silk; a short pebbled walk, bordered with large sea-shells led to the gate past beds of sweet-william and marigold, on either side of which stood an iron stag, staring with unwavering gaze at the street. There was no porch; at the low steps leading to the door with its graceful fanlight, stood two small pots filled with earth from which spouted two apple trees made entirely of lead.

Mrs. Wutheridge opened the door with a small gold key: "A foible of mine, my dear," she explained; "for I do so dislike doors left open, and everyone darting in and out as they please;" and they passed directly into a small and tasteful parlor furnished in a period no older than herself. As they entered two tall young men sprang to their feet, and stood bashfully at attention. With a charming smile, Mrs. Wutheridge led them forward by either hand. "George Herman," she said, "allow me to present you to your father.

"Darling, here is your son. He has taught Hebrew for forty years at the University.

"And this is your Uncle Ludwig."

"How do you do," said the professor. And he added bravely:

"Father and Uncle Ludwig."

The two men bowed stiffly. Mr. Wutheridge senior cleared his throat, and scraped politely

with his foot. "How do you do, sir," he said. "I trust I find you in good health?"

"Thank you," said the professor. "And you?"

"Ah," said Mr. Wutheridge simply.

So saying he retired in confusion. Then Uncle Ludwig stepped forward. "Allow me," he exclaimed, "to bid you welcome, sir. Your father, as you can see, is a little upset . . . this reunion . . . the heart is naturally affected . . . perhaps a dignified tear . . ."

"Does he look like oh and um?" asked Mrs. Wutheridge, from under the professor's arm.

"We're very glad you're here," concluded Uncle Ludwig.

"I love him," went on Matilda in what she took to be a whisper, "with a pure passion. Do you blame me, George? His hair is so wavy."

"Matilda," cried Uncle Ludwig, "do behave yourself . . . before your son. . . ."

"Well," said Matilda, "after all those years

with the Hebrews, I dare say a bit of pure passion won't hurt him any.

"He never married, Herman," she explained to her husband. "My poor son. I shall never be a grandmother."

At these words, Mr. Wutheridge senior looked relieved. "What a pity," he said politely.

"Perhaps he'd like a bit of something . . . perhaps a glass . . ."

But Mrs. Wutheridge took her son by the arm. "He's going right up to his room," she announced, "to rest and freshen up. These first precious moments are to be spent with his mother. We have a lot to say to each other, my son and I."

So saying, she marched him out of the parlor, and up the stairs, leaving Mr. Wutheridge and Uncle Ludwig to exchange by themselves their opinions of the new arrival.

Following his mother, the professor found himself in a small, clean room, painted white and apple-green. At first glance the furniture seemed a little undersized; he wondered if the bed, with its dimity of white and green roses would actually hold him, head, feet, and all. As he looked around his new home, the little attic under the eaves, over the garden with its marigold and sweet-william, a strange sadness made of longing and of peace took hold of him, crept through his eyes and nostrils, and knocked at his heart. It seemed to him that he was a boy again, that the long, patient, lonely years between had never been. For an instant the oversweet, over-grievous feeling of boyhood swept through his memory; he heard the cooing of doves with ears accustomed to their murmur; they spoke of his youth again, faint and almost forgotten.

Then he saw that his mother, who had been

hovering about the room, giving it little tidying touches, stood watching him with a strange smile on her face, her hands behind her back. It was a gesture oddly familiar; he could hardly be said to have remembered it; yet it awoke echoes of memories. And he found himself repeating half in a singsong chant,

"What have you got for me, mother?

"What have you got for me?"

But she shook her head; and her smile, from bright, turned watery and uncertain. "Nothing," she said; and drew from behind her back, a china doll dressed like a soldier. "Nothing," she said again, uncertainly, . . . "isn't it silly?"

And with eyes suddenly overflowing with tears, she sank down on the low bed, and laid her head against his coat. "I guess I wanted a little boy," she whispered, as his arm went

clumsily around her; "I kept getting ready for a little boy . . . all these years. . . ."

The professor cleared his throat. "I know," he said, "I know. It would have been more fun for you, mother. An old white-bearded scholar . . . how could you have expected anything like that?

"But I," and his voice grew joyous and tender, "I got just what I wanted, mother."

## CHAPTER 4

THE Reverend John Calvin Crisp left the Museum, of which he was curator, and stepped out into the fresh and sparkling air. The light of heaven bathed his forehead, and shone in his eyes, blue as old stones; his sharp face, proud and severe, and like a saint, moved austerely down the street, upon his erect, soldierly body, righteous and beautiful. His voice was musical, and his thoughts agreeable, dealing as they did with the life everlasting, and the forthcoming Mother's Day celebration organized by Mrs. Emma Meiggs.

Doctor Crisp had worked long and earnestly on earth; he had much to his credit, which he liked to remember. For one thing, it was due to his efforts more than to any other one per-

son's that the children in the schools of four states were forbidden the study of biology, history, German, and the theory of evolution. It was also due to his efforts that the five-volume work entitled *Sappho, Her Life and Times,* by the aged professor of Greek at the University, was seized, burned, and its publisher sent to prison. During the years of his untiring zeal, fourteen more books were destroyed after their contents had been noted and largely published in the newspapers. Among them was the pamphlet on Sex Hygiene in which Mrs. Mary Howe, the mother of six boys, attempted to instruct her family in those things which men and women must do, if they wish to have children. At the trial, in ringing tones, Doctor Crisp exclaimed, "There is no word in this book about chastity or continence;" which caused him to receive many congratulations.

During the administration of the reverend

doctor as censor of morals, a few young men and women committed suicide: but on the other hand, the Sunday-school was gratifyingly crowded; and after hours of prayer, the children found out what they could, by peeking and feeling.

So Doctor Crisp had many pleasant thoughts to keep him company.

Now, however, he was thinking of Mrs. Meiggs. Her zeal inspirited him; he thought he saw in Mother's Day an opportunity for the instruction of the young. For, he reflected, many children come to us here before they can rightly be said to have learned the difference between virtue and sin. Ignorance alone, although commendable, is not a triumph. Are we to expect an infant, for example, to understand the full horror of adultery? No, indeed. Let us first know, then detect the sin; and end in innocence.

And he murmured to himself the words, "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

But presently his brow grew clouded; and passing the house of Mr. and Mrs. Wutheridge, he frowned slightly. Some people, he thought, enjoy themselves in a very peculiar way. They seem to have a naughty, an irreverent manner more suited to life on earth than to the life everlasting. Joy is to be expected here, after the passage of Jordan; but to spend all eternity in the pursuit of it . . . ? One should have deeper spiritual aims. People like Mrs. Wutheridge impaired, in his humble opinion, the moral tone of the whole. Not that there was anything wrong, really, with Mrs. Wutheridge: sin, on that side of Jordan was out of the question; still, for her to seem so eternally amused . . . And then, those two men, one of them legal, and one Platonic . . . That was allowable, of course, although not exactly . . . well . . .

But why couldn't she be sober about it, and a little bit cast down . . . as one had a right to expect, under the circumstances . . . ?

His eyes encountering the potted apple tree, he compressed his lips, and looked down, in time to avoid stumbling over the figure of a man sitting disconsolately in the gutter.

"Excuse me, sir," he said hastily, stepping back. But then, seeing that the man made no effort to rise, he added more sharply,

"What is the matter, my friend?"

The other looked up wearily. "I'm a stranger here," he said.

At this, the Reverend Crisp could not repress a smile. "So were we all, at one time or another," he said.

But the other shook his head in a discouraged manner. "You don't understand," he said. "I'm a real stranger, all by myself. I can't find my people, even."

"That," murmured the Reverend Crisp sympathetically, "is indeed too bad. But perhaps I can help you. I have a large acquaintance here. . . . Suppose, to begin with, you tell me your name."

"My name is Lewis," said the man indifferently.

The Reverend Crisp looked more hopeful. "Lewis," he reflected: "there is a family by that name just down the street. The Edwin Lewises . . . ?"

Mr. Lewis shook his head with more emphasis than ever. "That wouldn't be my family," he said. "Not possibly."

"Well," said the curator, still cheerful, "suppose you tell me your family's name, and then we'll see."

"My father's name," said Mr. Lewis solemnly, "was Levy. My mother was a Weinstein."

And he looked without hope at Doctor Crisp.

"You don't know them?"

"I?" asked Doctor Crisp. "Know them? No, indeed.

"Are they here?"

"I don't think so," said Mr. Lewis sadly.

"I shouldn't expect so, either," said the Reverend Crisp.

And laying his hand gently on Mr. Lewis' shoulder, he added,

"My poor friend."

"Thank you," said Mr. Lewis gratefully.

"Let us hope that they are not actually in torment," said the Reverend Crisp.

"My God," exclaimed Mr. Lewis, "why should they be in torment? They never did anybody any harm."

To which the curator replied: "A higher power than you or I, my friend, has decided that for us. They are not here; therefore . . ."

And he shrugged his shoulders as though to say, Where are they?

"Aï," said Mr. Lewis.

And leaning his head on his hand, he allowed a tear to trickle through his fingers. "Not a soul here," he said with a groan, "not a soul to make me welcome, not a grandmother, not a grandfather, not an aunt, or a cousin, or even something distant—nothing, nobody. I might have known it; but I never stopped to think. Naturally, the Levys and the Weinsteins are all together somewhere. And mama says: Where is our Sammy: and papa says: What do you expect, he got himself baptized.

"Mama . . . you should know . . . your Sammy is lonesome. . . .

"I've never been in a place like this before, where I didn't know anybody. There was always some member of the family around, to be given a cigar, or some advice or something.

When I needed anything, my cousin Becky would do it for me. Once a year I had her for dinner, with her husband. And every Christmas and Thanksgiving, I ate with the family, at my sister's . . . she set a good table, poor Minna.

"Now I'll never see her again. She's at home with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and great-grandfather Weinstein. And I'm here, and I haven't got so much as a roof over my head."

"We'll soon attend to that, my man," said Doctor Crisp, who did not enjoy this recital.

"My daughters," continued Mr. Lewis, "won't be here for years—never, if they can help it. And when they come, they'll go to their husband's families. Good girls, but selfish. What a fortune I spent on them.

"Now, I'm here, and nobody knows where I should sleep, even. Not a soul; not a grandmother, not a cousin. . . .

"Nobody."

The Reverend Crisp considered. He was not without sympathy; and he had room at home. In fact he had often thought that a little company between himself and his wife . . . another face, let's say, for his glance to light on . . . another voice . . .

"My friend," he said, "there is room for you at home with me. My wife and I would be glad to have you live with us."

"That's very kind of you," said Mr. Lewis. "Yes, sir; that is really kind."

The reverend doctor continued thoughtfully: "Perhaps I could even make use of your services in the Museum, where I am curator."

"Oho," said Mr. Lewis more cheerfully: "a museum."

He rose, not without difficulty. "So, mister," he said; "shall we go home now? I've been sitting here a long while."

As he stepped forward, his foot kicked against a small object, about the size of a stone; he bent over to examine it. "Look," he said; "it's yellow, like gold."

Doctor Crisp smiled coldly. "It is gold," he answered.

"It has no value here?" asked Mr. Lewis incredulously.

"None whatever," replied the curator.

"Well," said Mr. Lewis, "I'll take it along, anyhow. Maybe it has no value, but just the same . . . And it would do me for the start of a collection. Where the heart has nothing to call its own, that's the time to begin a collection. It gives you something to come home to."

Clutching his gold pebble, he started off after Doctor Crisp, who was already striding ahead in the direction of the city. After a few steps, he caught up to him, and pulled at his sleeve.

"There's just one person here I'd like to

meet, mister," he declared, "if you could arrange it."

"Yes?" replied Doctor Crisp.

Mr. Lewis' voice became low and reverent. "Jesus," he said.

The Reverend Crisp did not reply. Instead, he hastened his steps in the direction of the city. And it seemed to Mr. Lewis that the curator's face expressed irritation and embarrassment.

## CHAPTER 5

PROFESSOR WUTHERIDGE and his mother sat together on the mossy floor of a grove of cedars outside the city. The air, made fragrant by the sun-warmed trees and by little flowers among the moss, moved with a slow caress across their cheeks and lay upon their eyes, green and honey-yellow, drowsily sweet. Beneath them the soft and springy moss bent gently toward the river which flowed at their feet, curling coolly about the bodies of Mr. Wutheridge senior and Uncle Ludwig, who swam up and down with one foot on the bottom, or rose suddenly from the shallow stream like dolphins, modestly attired in bathing-suits from elbow to knee.

"Do you think it strange, George Herman,"

asked Mrs. Wutheridge thoughtfully, pulling with her teeth at the petals of a flower which she held in her hand, "that I should live like this, in love, one might almost say, with two men? Sometimes, I confess, it astonishes me. And yet it is true that I am devoted to them both, it seems to me, equally."

She looked at her son out of the corner of her eye; it was the first intimate discussion she had allowed herself, and she felt a little uncertain of her ground. There he sat, with his white beard; did one speak of such things to people like that? Not so far as she remembered.

"Do I shock you, George Herman?" she asked timidly. Professor Wutheridge replied that his studies had prepared him for such shocks.

"What a joy," thought Mrs. Wutheridge; and she realized that she had always wanted

to discuss such things with an old gentleman with a white beard.

"One cannot study the past," the professor was saying, "without coming to the conclusion that women enjoyed the delights of love as much as men; that, in fact, they were interested parties."

"The delights of love?" asked Mrs. Wutheridge.

"The delights of love," said the professor simply.

"What a coarse expression," said Mrs. Wutheridge.

The professor looked surprised. "Excuse me," he said. And he added courteously,

"Of what were we speaking?"

"Of love," said his mother.

And pointing to where Mr. Wutheridge and Uncle Ludwig were innocently splashing, she exclaimed,

"There, my son: that is love."

Then, as the professor said nothing, Mrs. Wutheridge continued in a low voice, not looking at him:

"The delights of love, indeed. What are they for a good woman? A sort of struggle in the dark, which leaves her sleepless and irritable. I can discuss these things, because they are finished for me—long, long ago finished. And with my son . . . But when I was young, we never spoke of such things, not even with our parents. When I was married, I knew nothing; I thought my marriage was to be a sort of festival. . . . My own mother—your grandmother—gave me nothing in the way of information except a family recipe for plum pudding. The delights of love . . . I might add that of the two of us, your father and I, I was the one without fear. However, I soon realized that marriage is not a pleasure, but a sacrifice."

The professor felt his heart contract; he wanted to brandish his fist at his father, who continued to splash merrily about below him. But as he looked at the young and happy face, so innocent and reasonable, his mood changed, and an overwhelming pity for them both moved him. He reached over and took his mother's hand. "My poor child," he said.

Then he remembered Uncle Ludwig; and he dropped it again.

As though divining his thought, she continued:

"Sacrifice makes a mother of a woman. Your father never knew why I grew motherly in his arms. But he enjoyed it. It was what he wanted—a wife and mother all in one."

"Yes," said the professor. "Naturally," he added.

"All men do."

Mrs. Wutheridge shook her head sadly.

"Poor souls," she murmured. "Such a mistake. A wife is so much better."

Then before her son could reply, she added,

"The woman who finds herself a mother before her time, will have room in her heart for more than one son."

"Ah," said the Professor, joyously: "Uncle Ludwig."

And reaching over, he took her hand again.

"Yes," said Mrs. Wutheridge; "Uncle Ludwig. There they are, the two of them—my two sons, my two children . . . far more than you, whom I left so soon, could ever be. I love them both. But sometimes I ask myself if I have ever been a wife. And it is a long, long time since I was a daughter. . . .

"I wonder . . . if one can grow weary of being a mother—supposing there is nothing else to be, forever and ever and ever. . . ."

"Just think," said the professor with awe, "if

I were still a child. What a nuisance for you, mother. Three of us."

But she shook her head quickly; and it seemed to him that her eyes shone with moisture. "No, my dear," she said; "that would have been entirely different. What comes from the heart—so naturally——"

She broke off in time to welcome the two swimmers, who, having done with splashing, were making their way over the moss in her direction. "Well done," she called out enthusiastically; "I watched you both; you were like two great fish, leaping in the waves."

"Did you notice," cried Mr. Wutheridge senior, approaching with a steady drip; "I had my foot up off the bottom."

"Just once, George," said Uncle Ludwig. "Only once."

"For quite a long time," said Mr. Wutheridge.

"Well," said Uncle Ludwig, "I had my head under. I was swimming with it under. So I didn't see."

"It wasn't your head," said Mr. Wutheridge. "Not your whole head. Only up to your ears."

"That's just as bad," insisted Uncle Ludwig. "If it gets as far as your ears, it feels like your whole head. And that's what counts."

"You both did wonders," said Mrs. Wutheridge comfortably; "you made me actually anxious at times. Now go and dress, and hurry back here; meanwhile George Herman and I will set the luncheon."

When the two men returned from the bushes, they found a snowy cloth spread on the moss, with a repast of milk and honey, dates, cold mutton, and a herring. Mrs. Wutheridge was already placed; seated on either side of her, they had the professor between them. They were happy; they felt very well; and they gazed

at Matilda with adoration. Then they sighed, together.

"What a feast."

"A very good day for this sort of thing," said Uncle Ludwig.

"A very good day indeed," agreed Mr. Wutheridge.

Uncle Ludwig reached for the milk; presently he could be heard smacking his lips over it. "Next time," he said with a gasp, coming up out of it, "I'm going to open my eyes under water."

"No," said Mrs. Wutheridge.

"Ludwig—how wonderful."

"Well," said Mr. Wutheridge, "let him. He keeps one foot on the bottom, anyhow. What I'm going to do, is to dive. Yes—I'm going to leap right in, on my head."

"There," exclaimed Matilda. "How exciting."

"To-morrow," said Mr. Wutheridge bravely. "Or the day after."

And he looked at Uncle Ludwig as though to say, After all, she is prouder of me, naturally.

The professor beamed about him with gentle joy. There he was with his father and mother—and his Uncle Ludwig, whom, it is true, he had not exactly looked for—in short, his family, his own and only people, who were as much himself, almost, as he; and he, too, a part of them—all except Uncle Ludwig, and all so good looking, so happy and attractive. . . . The warm and sunny air caressed his nose with the perfume of cedars; the flowers and moss upheld the luncheon-cloth with small and springy arms. The drowse of eternity, like a balm, lay upon his heart. He had been so much alone; and now he was to have company, forever and ever.

Raising the milk pitcher above his head, he exclaimed,

"I am happy, my children. Indeed, I feel that I am young again, but at the same time, I am full of hope and courage. What could be

better than that? To-morrow I shall go swimming with you. You will see; you will be astonished."

And making a swimming motion with the arm which held the milk pitcher, he exclaimed,

"Yup."

Mr. Wutheridge senior and Uncle Ludwig moved uncomfortably in their places; they regarded each other with sober looks. To tell the truth, they had forgotten him; now their happiness was dimmed because this old gentleman with a beard wished to share it. Their anxious glances sought Matilda, heavy with dismay.

"There," she said quickly coming to the rescue, and patting the professor's hand, "you must go a little slowly, my dear. The water here is cold, and very swift; there is a terrible undertow. Besides, we've no extra bathing-suit; and in the second place . . . in the second place, I'd be all alone."

"Then," said the professor, after a moment's thought, "I'll go fishing."

"Yes," said Mr. Wutheridge senior; "that's it."

"That's just the thing," exclaimed Uncle Ludwig. "Fishing. Yes, indeed. Down a ways, where we won't disturb you."

"And you can sit," the professor said happily to his mother, "and talk to me while I fish."

But Mr. Wutheridge's face grew longer than ever. "Matilda," he cried; "do you mean that you would leave us to swim all alone?"

"Do you mean," asked Uncle Ludwig anxiously, "that you'd go off, out of sight, while we were swimming?

"Supposing something happened?

"And you not there to see it.

"The current . . . the undertow . . .

"No, no. No, no.

"Matilda, I cannot allow it."

Mrs. Wutheridge sighed—and laughed—and sighed again. "You see, George Herman," she said, "I can't leave them. You'll simply have to do your fishing by yourself, my dear, while I watch the—gentlemen."

The professor felt his lower lip tremble. "Yes, mother," he said; and looked sadly at his father. "I could fish here," he said meekly: "I wouldn't be much trouble. And it doesn't matter if I don't catch anything."

But Mr. Wutheridge shook his head. "Just think," he said, "if I got caught on a hook."

"Or I," said Uncle Ludwig, "with my head under water. . . ."

The professor took a deep breath. "Well, well," he said, "we won't think about it any more. I'll just sit here with mother, and watch you swim. It's not important, really; it's not important at all."

## CHAPTER 6

William Wilberforce Meiggs followed his mother down the street in the direction of the Museum. He would have preferred to walk beside her, with her hand in his arm, but that was too much like his father: it would have made him feel uncomfortable, as though he were pretending to something. It would have been glory—glory he often dreamed of, but never deserved: to stand up in front of everybody with his mother on his arm, like a man. But that was unlikely; he knew he'd never get to it. And besides, it wasn't just glory; there was some wish of his heart about it that made him feel queer inside. Well, why should he give himself airs? If he did, his father would attend to it, anyway; he'd make him feel small again,

smaller than ever. He'd do it just by being there, so large and easy, where he belonged; and he wouldn't have any doubts about it. Whereas William Wilberforce belonged a little in the rear, in a modest position, and not too much noticed.

That's where he'd always been at home, after all; and what chance had he ever had to better it? The most a man could be, until he was somebody's husband, was his mother's son. Even after she'd gone, there was so much to keep him down—all the thoughts people helped him to think, all the feelings people made it easy for him to feel. There were the songs people wrote; and the sermons in church; and books about great men's mothers—the way they said the word, even—mother—it sounded so sweet and lawful. A man's best friend was his mother. Other people made trouble sometimes, but not a mother. No—no trouble, ever;

just taking care of things, keeping trouble away. Probably if she'd been there, he never would have had that last fatal illness. But then, where would he be now? Still at home, all alone, with no one to take care of him; haunted by what she'd want him to do, and not to do—and feeling, all the time, so unable to do anything at all, so lost and lonely, so young and unable. . . .

Mrs. Meiggs sailed down the street ahead of him. Her thoughts, concerned with good works, reflected the order and peace about her, and ignored her son, whose education she meant presently to undertake at the Museum. What peace, she thought, what goodness all about. No need, any longer, to be afraid of joy, for the battle was over, and the victory won. Nothing could be wrong again, ever; nothing here was a sin. Mrs. Wutheridge's apple tree was a little out of taste; and her two

men seemed a good deal, but not, oh, not a sin. And if having two men weren't a sin, why surely there was nothing wrong in having one —and being happy about it. And Mrs. Meiggs was happy; for the truth was that she loved Mr. Meiggs. She had always loved him, even on earth, where he made so much trouble for her. Only then she had often felt dark and full of shame. Now the shame was gone; they had both been saved, and there they were. Saved.

It made her feel very dreamy, almost girlish, she thought. Well, nobody minded, that was a blessing. The women all about seemed to feel just as girlish as she did; and the men twirled their mustaches, and looked pleased and manly. They could afford to, naturally—being in bliss.

Man and woman created He them. What was simpler, really? The blessing of earth, the peace of heaven . . . now she could enjoy them. Love, and being happy, and no chance to sin any more. . . .

There was William, of course: his meek presence a little in the rear demanded to be remembered. She loved him, too; but not in the same way. He wasn't, as Mr. Meiggs was, a person outside herself, a stranger, all shining with beauty. Yes, beauty; it didn't look like beauty, perhaps, but it felt like it. William was just herself, something she'd borne and suckled and nursed and tidied and cared for; she couldn't feel girlish about William. Not that she wanted to; no, when she looked at him she felt her heart flooded with motherly feelings. They were precious; but they didn't make her feel new and dewy.

"Come along, William; why do you hang back so, treading on my heels? Walk here, with me."

Not new and dewy. On the contrary, it made her feel full of cares, though strong to see to them: it was a triumph-feeling-with-tenderness. But there was always someone at

her heels—"Do come along, William"—and no real gaiety, like being with Mr. Meiggs and feeling shy and breathless. At home she'd always felt ashamed of feeling breathless; and that had left her with nothing but the triumph-feeling-with-tenderness. But here, where there was nothing to be ashamed of . . .

New and dewy she felt, and meant to, what was more, for the rest of eternity.

They'd put up a statue to her at home; but did they know what she looked like, really? The Mother's Day leader, the church-woman militant . . . yes, she'd done her best, she had nothing to feel ashamed of. And they'd no call to spoil her statue that way, either . . . ah, well, that was over for her now. And casting up her eyes, she murmured: "Forgive them, Father, for they knew not what they did."

She was a little vague as to what might still

be above her; but her eyes went up, none the less.

Supposing—only supposing, of course—they were to put up a statue to her here, too. What would it be like, she wondered. Probably they'd place it at the door of the Museum, next to the replica of Moses: a fine, noble, tender-looking woman. But then, at the same time, she had another picture: it would be a statue of herself and Mr. Meiggs, hand in hand—well, perhaps she might be just a little bit in front, seeing that it was she, really, who had saved them—both of them looking up, with such a happy pure expression . . . a dewy look . . .

She sighed. Would there ever be such a statue? Not without a lot of striving first, she knew, and good works done. She set her lips.

And with a determined face, she entered the Museum, with William at her heels.

They found themselves in a large, square room, lighted from the ceiling. Ranged about the walls were solid-looking cases of oak and glass; and in the center, a very fair facsimile of the Ark of the Covenant, the original of which—as was the case with most of the treasures of this Museum—was the property of the Jews in Zion. The tablets, cut in granite from the quarries of Vermont, and set like a screen before the Ark itself, were printed in English, thereby avoiding the troublesome Hebrew vowel-points and noun-endings, or the implication that the Ten Commandments had not been handed directly to the Reverend Crisp from the fiery cloud on Sinai.

In the first glass case, marked "Fundamentals," was to be seen a small wooden ark, painted brown; Noah and the animals, all cleverly carved, paraded its decks; and the whole was encased in some miraculous man-

ner in a sealed glass bottle. Beside it was coiled a snake made all of brass; a bit of petrified fungus marked "manna, B.C. 2700" and a matzoth.

William gazed at these relics with awe-struck curiosity. Then, moving to another case, his gaze was arrested by a huge tooth, sharp and pointed like that of some great animal. It lay there without a tag; and it was while he was wondering about it that he became aware that his mother was no longer beside him, and that her place had been taken by someone else. He turned to see who it was.

"Why," he exclaimed, "it's you, again." And he held out his hand to Mr. Lewis, born Levy.

"Yes," said Mr. Lewis, "it's me."

He shook hands with William.

"This is where I am," he said. And he added, half proudly, half doubtfully,

"I'm in the Museum."

William smiled happily. "Then," he said, "you're all right, aren't you. I'm so glad. I was going to speak to my mother about you. But . . ."

"But . . .?" echoed Mr. Lewis.

"But," said William hurriedly, "she's so busy—with Mother's Day and all . . . busier here, even than . . . She never has time for anything. . . .

"I mean . . . we haven't really had a talk ourselves yet. . . ."

Mr. Lewis looked at the boy thoughtfully. "So," he said.

"Anyhow," said William more comfortably, "it's all right now, isn't it; because you were welcome after all."

Mr. Lewis shrugged his shoulders. "Welcome?" he said slowly; "yes—perhaps. But what does welcome mean? It means that I

wasn't thrown out; it means that I have a bed to lie down on, and something to eat. And when I walk along the street, people give me bows, but if I weren't here, whom would it hurt?

"Nobody says to me, Sammy—or even Samuel—where have you been? And what I mean is, if nobody wants to know where you've been, is that a welcome?"

William nodded his head; he remembered his first long evening in his mother's arms, and all the things he had wanted to say—for which he had no words—and how she hadn't asked him . . .

"I guess you're right," he said.

Mr. Lewis seemed satisfied. "We shouldn't talk too much in a Museum," he said. "Come along, and let me show you the collection."

Waving his hand in the direction of the four walls, he declared, "It's just what you see."

And leaning close to William, and lowering his voice to a whisper, he added,

"It's not much of a Museum."

"No?" asked William, startled.

"No," said Mr. Lewis gloomily. "Look at that matzoth. And the ark. Nothing but copies.

"Have we no primitives?"

## CHAPTER 7

He looked around him disconsolately. "I'm used to a Museum with pictures," he said; "pictures of the Apostles, panels of the Mother of God, or ladies dressed like saints. Then I know what I'm doing. And statues, by Michael Angelo or Donatello, or those fine old Germans who used to carve angels out of wood. You see, I know a good deal about Museums; and something about art. But here it don't do me any good; because nothing is real, anyhow, before Luther."

He pointed to a case standing against the opposite wall. "Over there," he said, "are the real treasures. Do you want to see them? There's the very hammer used by Luther's father in the copper mines of the Counts of

Mansfeld. I know it's real, because, for one thing, you couldn't make a hammer like that to-day. And Anne Boleyn's garter. A bloody cloth from St. Bartholomew's Day: a ring, made out of hair from the Devil's tail, loaned us by Cotton Mather: the manuscript of a book called *Elsie As Mother;* and a fine painting of Bishop Brougham's new cathedral at home.

"Such a collection is interesting, and even valuable. But is it art?"

"Art?" asked William in surprise. "Why should it be art?"

"Well, then," said Mr. Lewis, "all right; is it history?"

"I think," replied William, peering at the cases, "that the things you've mentioned, like Cotton Mather's ring, are very historical."

"There aren't enough of them," said Mr. Lewis, "to make a history."

"And anyhow," William continued, "this isn't history; it's religion."

"Religion," said Mr. Lewis.

"And what is that?"

William stared at him in amazement. "Look here," he burst out finally, "isn't all this enough for you? Here you are; you've been saved from hell-fire; you can taste bliss forever and ever; and you ask what is religion. That seems very ungrateful, to me. Only a few days ago you were wondering if you'd even be welcome here."

"My people," said Mr. Lewis thoughtfully, "have always been like that. You must excuse me." He shot a quick glance at William from under his lashes. "And you," he said, "you are tasting bliss?'"

William's eyes flew around the room in search of his mother, who, however, was not to be seen. "Yes, I am," he said stoutly.

Mr. Lewis nodded. "I'm glad to hear it. Perhaps I have more to ask of heaven than you have. After all, you were born to come here. But with me it was different: I had to make a choice."

"Well," said William, suddenly feeling a little irritable, "you made it, didn't you?"

Mr. Lewis smiled at him sadly. "Yes," he said, "I made it. And so now I ask myself, where is everything I expected."

William shrugged his shoulders. Whatever had he expected then? Heaven had always been for William the place his mother was going to be; that was religion, as it applied to him, personally. And what other way should it apply to him? To be saved was the important thing, not to die any more, to be home forever and ever with Mrs. Meiggs, and to keep out of the flames. Whether he found himself, then, in God's presence, or in a Museum,

seemed singularly unimportant. What had the Jew expected? He had received what they all had—life everlasting, and the opportunity to enjoy himself without sinning any more. It wasn't William's fault if he wasn't satisfied.

"Oh, come on," he exclaimed, "let's go look at the Devil's tail."

But he felt irritated at Mr. Lewis, and annoyed about something—what was it?—and a little vexed with himself—but why?—and altogether aware that something had happened —somewhere—to trouble him, just a little, just a very little . . .

Nothing had happened to trouble Mrs. Meiggs, however. She sat in the curator's office with Doctor Crisp, and discussed good works. Her face was pink and fresh-looking, her eyes shone, and she allowed herself to cross one knee over the other, under her dress, which was mostly of lace.

"Early in the morning," she was saying, "the children, dressed all in white, will go out to pick flowers for their parents in the woods and fields outside the city. Then, each carrying a bouquet, they will gather in front of the Museum, for speeches; and after that there'll be a parade, with a band, and ice cream and lemonade on somebody's lawn. That's the way I see it. We must have a king and a queen, to wear paper crowns; and someone to be the spirit of motherhood."

"Who," said Doctor Crisp gallantly, "could better express the spirit of motherhood than you, dear Mrs. Meiggs?"

She blushed with joy. "Oh, no," she murmured, "I am not worthy. Perhaps Mrs. Stowe . . . or Queen Victoria . . ."

"Mrs. Stowe is too old," said Doctor Crisp, "and Queen Victoria might feel a little disinclined, seeing that her own son . . . you understand . . ."

"Ah, yes," said Mrs. Meiggs with a sigh; "poor woman.

"Well, then . . . if it must be me . . ."

She uncrossed her knees. "One must do one's duty," she declared.

"As for the children," said the Reverend Crisp, "shall we let them choose their own king and queen?"

But Mrs. Meiggs looked doubtful. "I think not," she said. "It would make them feel too important. And besides, they'd be chosen for such stupid reasons, and not at all for the things we want—piety, and devotion, and modesty . . . don't you think?"

"I dare say you're right," the doctor agreed. "Well, then—whom shall we have? Let's say for queen . . . there are many pretty girls to choose from."

And his eyes shone happily.

"Indeed there are," said Mrs. Meiggs gra-

ciously. "A pretty face under a golden crown. How sweet that is."

"Exactly," said Doctor Crisp. "That is just what I meant. And the king," he added thoughtfully: "I was wondering, if perhaps your son—that is, if you do not think him too old . . ."

"Too old?" cried Mrs. Meiggs. "Of course not; what an idea. Why, he'd like nothing better."

And she sat more erect than ever.

"Then it is decided," said Doctor Crisp. "The mother—the son: very beautiful. As for the queen, if we are to have a pretty face, as you say, we might have Lucy Tompkins. She is very pretty. Or Amy Coulter, with her blue eyes. Or dark-haired Emily . . ."

"Exactly," said Mrs. Meiggs; "yes, indeed. But suppose we leave the queen for later, Doctor. Perhaps we'll find someone who will really

fit the part; someone who will bring something spiritual to it. We don't want just a pretty face, do we? No."

"No?" said Doctor Crisp faintly. "No."

"Perhaps," continued Mrs. Meiggs, "if we even took the little Johnson girl—from down the street . . . you know, the homely one . . . to show how spirit rises triumphant over everything . . ."

"Very beautiful," croaked the Reverend Crisp. "Still . . ."

"Yes," cried Mrs. Meiggs, full of fire. "That's it; it has just been shown me. We mustn't have a pretty face, Doctor; we must stick to spirit."

"Ah," said the doctor gloomily; "spirit. Well . . ."

"Then that's decided," said Mrs. Meiggs. "And now about the speeches . . ."

Then it was the doctor's turn to sit up.

"I thought," she said, "we'd ask Mr. Bryan to speak."

"Mr. Bryan," said Doctor Crisp without enthusiasm; "yes; a very good idea. But to tell you the truth, Mrs. Meiggs, very few people here seem anxious to speak. Doctor Beecher spends his time in the library among the romances; and Bishop Wilberforce prefers to visit the zoo. That, Mrs. Meiggs, is the truth of the matter."

Mrs. Meiggs gazed at him unhappily. "Whatever shall we do?" she murmured. "For we cannot have Mother's Day without speeches."

The Reverend Crisp paused. "It is true," he observed, "that I was not considered an orator at home. But I was always ready—and I might say able—to speak. There were many things I would have liked to have said. In fact, I have here a little speech . . ."

And he drew it carelessly out of his pocket.

"Then," cried Mrs. Meiggs happily, "you will speak?"

"I will speak," declared Doctor Crisp.

Mrs. Meiggs clapped her hands. "How marvelous," she breathed. "Why, we're all organized. Only the ice cream to attend to."

"And the band," said Doctor Crisp.

"We'll get the city band," said Mrs. Meiggs.

"And the parents," added Doctor Crisp, "will supply the ice cream."

"In return for the flowers," concluded Mrs. Meiggs, joyously.

## CHAPTER 8

Mr. Lewis came back from the Museum carrying a small piece of gold to add to his collection which by this time included about a dozen pieces of varying sizes. Without value, but hidden carefully in a drawer, they gave him, as he had said, something to come home to. He counted them, described them, weighed them, and arranged them in order; and wrote it all down. That gave him a catalogue, of which he was proud.

And he needed something to be proud of, he thought. His home with Doctor and Mrs. Crisp was not an unhappy one: the eminent divine and his pale, patient wife did what they could to make him welcome. Mrs. Crisp dryly admitted that she was ready to take the place of his mother; and Doctor Crisp also seemed

glad to have him there. But did he feel at home? Or was he glad in turn?

No, there was something wrong with it. He felt it at once, always, as soon as he put his foot in the door. It wasn't the sort of home he was used to; for one thing, it didn't feel like a home. It was just a roof and some walls, without love in it, with people never really talking to each other, not out of their hearts, never really seeing and feeling each other. . . . He thought of his own childhood home, of his mother and father, of the Friday night suppers, the warm light over the table—did it come from the candles? or from the way they all looked at one another, slow and searching and loving? he couldn't be sure. But there it was, or rather there it had been, something warm and his own, something that he could understand, not this strange, sweet-and-sour politeness. . . .

That light of love; where would he find it again?

But they were all like that, he thought, all the people of the city, everyone he met. He got bows on the street; and all about him he saw uplifted faces, shining with a sort of happiness, a cold righteous lonely happiness, not the warm thing he remembered, not the way his mother used to look, beaming around the table on Friday nights—or even later, when he was Mr. Lewis, with a picture gallery, and big cigars to smoke. . . .

Another happiness, a different joy . . . far away, far away, home.

He sat at table, at the evening meal which consisted only of bread and milk, gazing thoughtfully at his companions. No honey had ever entered the Reverend Crisp's house. Mrs. Crisp kept from her table the sweetness she had never had in life, denying her hus-

band, in one thin simple gesture, the gratification of his senses, and punishing herself for having longed, on earth, for something sweeter than she'd got.

"What a stranger she is to me," thought Mr. Lewis. "How far away she looks, sitting there. Is she part of this, any more than I?" But then he thought:

"It is I who am the stranger here."

He was both right and wrong. He was a stranger; but so was Mrs. Crisp. Forty years of loving no one had made everyone seem strange to her. Forty years across the table from her husband, whom she disliked, and bore with pious fortitude, had left her unable to love anything. She had been a faithful helpmeet year in, year out, performing without ardor but with a sense of adequacy the duties of a wife from the hour of getting out of bed to that of getting into it again. She

had looked for a reward of angels and thrones of glory; but all she got was her husband, forever and ever.

She no longer disliked him. Still, she was obliged to admit that she felt less enthusiasm for life eternal than she had looked for. It seemed to her very much like life at home, without the odd chance of sinning by mistake; and without—she set her lips in a thin line—the honey, if she had anything to say about it.

Thank God, she still had her principles. Forty years without a separation, except for that one extraordinary time when she went to visit her sister—that strange sister of hers who so incredibly divorced her husband, not because of adultery—oh, sinful word—and not in anger, which one could understand, but because—imagine admitting such a thing—he hurt her . . . and so was lost to Mrs. Crisp

for all eternity. Mrs. Crisp who had not divorced her husband although she disliked him, and so sat face to face with him across the bread and milk forever and ever and ever.

Well, he was a good man, she guessed; he'd got them both safely past the flames, and over Jordan: she'd have to do with that. But he needn't expect, for the dryness he'd given her all her life, to revel in the heavenly meadows like a bee.

She glanced at Mr. Lewis. What would life have been like with him, she wondered. So much money, so many pictures, such big cigars. She gave a slight shudder; but not of revulsion. There was nothing dry about Mr. Lewis.

Without meaning to, she put her hand up to tidy her hair. Nothing dry about him; and nothing sinful either, seeing that he sat there, at her own supper table, saved and healthy. Supposing she'd had the thrones of glory at



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home, the way he'd had, and now could rest, and feel sweetness—drowsy peace, and joy at remembering . . .

She sighed; it was too late for the thrones of glory. But there was still time for sweetness, perhaps. Nothing sinful, or wrong; that would be impossible, fortunately—but something warm and friendly, something she'd always missed, except for those two weeks with her sister—something like a picnic in the woods, with young folks whispering, and far-off music, and sweet smells; and flutters of laughter—giggles, even—in her heart.

Well—why not? There was Mrs. Wutheridge, with two; and she'd even loved one of them first. Surely, oh surely, if Mrs. Crisp, who had never loved anybody, were to have a friend, would anyone wonder?

Or, if they wondered, did she—should she—care?

"I suppose," she said tentatively, "you're very busy at the Museum these days, Mr. Lewis?"

"Eh," said Mr. Lewis, roused from his reverie, "what? The Museum? Oh—yes. Busy. Yes. Not very."

"I used to go there very often," she said. "Doctor Crisp used to take me. I loved the Noah's Ark. To think of all that, inside a bottle. I don't know how they do it."

"Exactly," said Mr. Lewis.

"A Museum," said Mrs. Crisp, "is a very inspiring place."

Mr. Lewis leaned closer, and dropped his voice.

"Have you ever seen an angel, Mrs. Crisp?" he asked.

Mrs. Crisp sat bolt upright; she looked at her husband, and he looked at her.

"I never go to the Museum any more," she

said in a small far-away voice; "and I used to go so often."

"I mean a real angel," said Mr. Lewis doggedly; "with wings."

"Bother," said Doctor Crisp. And he frowned into his milk. What was the man after? Wasn't he content with life eternal, and work in the Museum? Why couldn't he settle down quietly, and accept what there was? These foreigners, he thought, . . . these Jews. Well, that was it, of course: at heart Mr. Lewis was a Jew. These Jews then, with their restless questions. An angel with wings: —what good would that do?

No good at all. Not with wings, he thought, looking across the table at Mrs. Crisp; no—but say an angel like Mrs. Meiggs, with a firm happy look in her face, and organization in her hands; a woman full of love, and good works, a pure but juicy woman, the right com-

panion for a busy man. A woman—an angel—whose every other word was honey. . . .

He gave a dry swallow.

Well, then, simply a loving woman. What had Meiggs done to deserve such a thing? And why not himself? The lusts of the flesh had never bothered him; at least, they'd never got the better of him. He'd risen above them; and now he had bread and milk without honey; whereas Meiggs, who had lived such a disgusting life, and had only been saved by the skin of his teeth, had the sweetness, now and forever.

And here was this Jew, with his talk about angels, and other theological phenomena; as though that could make any difference. Wasn't it enough to be saved, to be in a state of bliss; to be comfortable, and at peace? But Jews were like that—they always made a nuisance. Mr. Meiggs had settled down; Doctor Crisp

had settled down. . . . It did no good to ask questions. Otherwise one might want to know why Mr. Meiggs, for instance . . .

Not that Doctor Crisp would rather have been Mr. Meiggs; or anything, in fact, but Doctor Crisp. But if a reward for right-doing were really to be a reward, oughtn't it, perhaps, be something more than an endless opportunity for that self-same right-doing?

These theological problems . . .

He sighed deeply.

"Yes," Mrs. Crisp was saying, "it's a good long time since I was there. I always felt that I mustn't disturb Doctor Crisp at his work. But now that he has an assistant—perhaps—that is, if it wouldn't be too much trouble——

"There must be so many new things to see," she murmured.

Mr. Lewis closed his eyes wearily. Thing to see—statues, pictures, Noah's Ark—d

things in a Museum. Was that theology? Where was the living word, the veritable presence, the wonder and the glory? Was it for this he had foresworn Abraham and Isaac, the hard religion of his exiled fathers, his brown-eyed mothers? In order to eat the bread and milk of paradise, and work in a Museum?

He replied, sighing; "You must come visit me now, instead of Doctor Crisp."

Mrs. Crisp smiled; and looked coyly down at her plate. "I'll come very soon," she declared.

"Do," said Mr. Lewis, and lost himself in the milk.

## CHAPTER 9

Mr. Lewis got up, and went outside. In front of the house he met Professor Wutheridge, carrying a fishing-pole, and wearing a large straw hat. "Well, well," he exclaimed joyously, "I am glad to see you."

"And I," replied the professor, "am glad, in turn, to see you. I was afraid that perhaps you might not have been welcome here, after all."

Mr. Lewis shrugged his shoulders. "Worse things have happened to me in my life," he said, "than that I shouldn't have been welcome here. What are you doing? Fishing?"

And without hesitation, he also turned in the direction of the river.

"I'll go along with you," he said, "if you don't mind."

"I shall be more than happy to have your company," the professor answered.

The two men walked soberly down the street together. Over them the cloudless sky beamed with eternal light. Sweet odors conspired together in the air, the kiss of cinnamon, the perfume of lilies. Children played in the little gardens, seesaw, house, red rover red rover: their light, shrill voices competed with the low cooing of doves. They were in bliss, no one could ever again take their games away from them. It did not keep them from quarreling, but they never wept. The knowledge that they were saved stilled their fears.

At the river the professor looked up and down. Then he chose a sloping bank of grass on which to seat himself. "Come," he said; "you have nothing to do; sit here with me a while; do not leave me all alone."

Mr. Lewis sank gratefully down beside him.

"What have you got for bait?" he asked, with practical interest.

"Bait?" said the professor. He pulled out a piece of bread. "I shall tie this on the line," he declared; "and that will tempt them."

So saying, he tied the bread on to the line, and threw it into the water, where it presently dissolved. Then placing the fishing-pole against a tree, and drawing his hat over his eyes, he extended himself on his back and gazed peacefully above him.

"I should like to take home a fine carp to my mother," he said, "or a great herring, such as swim in the blue waters of the Sea of Cinnereth."

Mr. Lewis gave a sigh. "Cinnereth," he said; "Cinnereth. That is in Galilee, where Jesus was."

Professor Wutheridge nodded underneath his hat. "Yes," he said simply; "Jesus walked

above its waters; and His disciples fished for herring in its depths. Jesus also taught in the vineyards and villages upon its slopes."

Mr. Lewis looked about him uneasily. Then he leaned down until his mouth was level with the professor's hat. "Tell me," he whispered; "tell me something. Where is He now? Where is Jesus, I mean."

The professor's eyes were closed; he opened them with surprise. "Jesus?" he exclaimed. "Why—I don't know. Isn't He here?"

"I don't think so," said Mr. Lewis.

"I haven't seen Him, either," said the professor, looking around. "Well, tell me: did you expect to find Him here?"

"Didn't you?" asked Mr. Lewis.

"Did I?" murmured the professor. He shook his head. "I'm not at all sure," he said; "in fact, I'm inclined to think not. I know that I expected to see my mother again. But Jesus?

No—I think not. At least, not after I got here."

At these words Mr. Lewis let out a low wail. "But why not?" he cried. "What's the matter? When I speak of Him to Doctor Crisp, he doesn't say anything, and I get a look. If I mention angels to Mrs. Crisp, she changes the subject, or I get another look. What is it? Where are they? And if they're not here, then what did I come here for? Answer me that."

The professor sat up with a thoughtful air; he pushed his hat back on his head, and took hold of his beard in both hands. "How can I answer you that?" he replied. "I came to join my father and mother; but I do not know what you came for. Angels? Here? My friend, you know nothing about angels. They were beings of another world, which perished long before this city was ever dreamed of. There were no angels in Greece, or in Rome. But in Assyria

there were bull-headed Kerubs, lion-faced and winged Seraphs, lesser gods, the baalim of conquered cities, the djinns and demons of the water-holes. Vindictive and august, they ruled the ignorant tribes and nations of the desert. What have we to do with such beings here? Or with the valkyries of the Norse Wotan; or the houris of Mohammed? I do not remember that an angel ever appeared before Luther. The Devil came to tempt him; and received an ink-pot flung at his head for his pains. We have some hairs of his tail in the Museum. So much for angels.

"And as for Jesus—after all, we know little about Him, less than we know of Bel, or Mammon, or Mars, or the Phœnician Aphrodite. We know that He was at least half a Jew; and that the Jews crucified Him. Since they did not want him at that time, it is unlikely that they have Him now. But on the other hand

did you expect to find Him lolling here among the lilies? Or fishing in the river?"

So saying, he felt his line gingerly, to see if there was a fish on it.

"No, my friend," he remarked, sinking back again, "this is a city made to receive in beatitude those who have gone regularly to church, and have not sinned too much. Its citizenry numbers many important people, but not the great archangels of the Thebaid, the Kerubs of Safed, or the saints of Rome; and not, so far as I know, that most mystic of all figures, Jesus, the Son of Man.

"However, I do not see why it should trouble you."

"Trouble me," groaned Mr. Lewis.

"Unless," continued the professor, "you care for theology in other than a practical sense."

And he looked earnestly and sympathetically at Mr. Lewis, who nodded his head sadly.

"I guess that's it," he said. "I was born to it."

"Of course," agreed the professor enthusiastically: "I had forgotten that you belong to the race of the psalmists, of the prophets, of Hillel of Jerusalem, of Philo of Alexandria, of Loria of Safed, of Jochai, of Akiba, of Eliezer of Worms. Now you find yourself among such men as Oliver Cromwell and W. J. Bryan. Well, that is sad for you."

And placing his hand on Mr. Lewis' knee, he inquired anxiously,

"Why did you do it?"

Mr. Lewis gazed darkly at the river whose blacker water, icy cold, passed under him with a steady movement, and without sound. "Do I know?" he murmured at length. "I was unhappy because nobody wanted me. Nobody, that is, except my family. But who wanted my family? Nobody. So I grew up to under-

stand that there were two lots of people; one, like myself, whom nobody wanted; and the other lot, who did the wanting and not wanting.

"I was ashamed of not being wanted. I thought to myself, what is the good of being a Jew? I get nothing out of it. Those others, they look happier than I feel; they go to church on Sunday, and their religion gives them pleasure; while mine only keeps me out of things. When they die they have angels, and Jesus; and while they're alive, they enjoy themselves. So I said to myself, Sammy, if you stay a Jew, you're more of a fool than I think."

"Tut," said the professor, shaking his head.

"So there I was," said Mr. Lewis.

"And were you any happier?" asked the professor.

Mr. Lewis looked thoughtful. "On earth,"

he said, "I was a little happier. For one thing, I didn't have to be ashamed of being a Jew any more. I had no friends; but I was too busy to know it. Here is where I know it. The Jews I grew up with—they would have been my friends. In church I had only acquaintances; but I made so much money all the time that nobody noticed it."

He was silent, biting the sweet end of a blade of grass. "What I really wanted," he said at last, "was a religion for my heart. Try to understand me. The God we worshiped in the Temple at home, never loved me. He was just a big eye behind a lamp, looking to see if I behaved myself, or if He could do to me what He did to Job. Maybe He loved Israel—but not Samuel Levy. In church I had Jesus. Everybody loves Jesus, even a Jew. How can you help it, when He loves you back?

"And there He was, this Friend, Jesus, in

the church. Did He love me? Why not? Did He want me? Sure.

"So I came over. I thought maybe I won't be welcome everywhere, but He'll be there, and He'll be glad to see me. Well—it's not like what I expected. I can't find Him anywhere! nobody even speaks of Him. My mother, where is she? Somewhere with her ancestors. The angels, you say, are all dead in Assyria, or else in heaven with the popes. Maybe that's where Jesus is. What do you think? Did I make a mistake?"

The professor did not reply at once. Instead, he arose, and taking up his fishing-pole, carefully drew in the line. The bread had disappeared.

"There are fish in this river," he observed: "they ate my bread."

So saying, he took out another small piece, and tied it tightly to the line. Then he placed

it gently in the water. The current caught it and lodged it under a stone, where an eel ate it, with exclamations of pleasure.

But the professor returned to his seat with a thoughtful air. "My friend," he said, "I can see that you love Jesus; but I wonder if you understand Him. You seem to me like those early disciples, also Jews, who followed Him in grief rather than in joy. He spoke to their inmost ears; but only their ignorant hopes and fears replied."

He looked around him, at the sunny, peaceful river bank, the flowers growing in the moss, the cedars bending dark and green above them. He looked back at the city, from whose narrow white houses a low and happy murmur arose and mingled with the river-silence. "Look," he said, "at this city of houses, this home of reunion, this heaven of repose; here its inhabitants see, and hear, and know only

what they desired or wished on earth; here the few powers they developed in life, and only those, find eternal employment. Here is no want, no change, no hope, no pain, no fear —only peace, only rest from the battle, only shelter from the storm."

He put his hand once more on Mr. Lewis' knee. "But the Son of Man," he said gently, "hath not where to lay His head."

## CHAPTER 10

Professor Wutheridge went home without his carp, and without a herring to bring his mother. Nevertheless, his mind was peaceful; as he walked back through the streets, he thought to himself, How fortunate it is that there are no angels here, in whose glorious company I should feel abashed and uncomfortable. What place is there for glory in heaven? The heart of a free man longs for a democracy, where all will be neighbors. From his mother he expects love; and from his father wisdom and benevolence. And from those around him, friendship and good company.

Glory is for earth, whose troubled dreams still deal with day and night, with light and dark, with life and death.

Musing in this fashion, he passed through the gate of his garden; and saw his father seated on the steps of his house, with his knees drawn up under his chin. As the professor walked up the pebbled path neatly bordered with shells, Mr. Wutheridge gazed at him politely. "Well, sir," he inquired, "did you have an agreeable fishing?"

The professor sank down on the steps beside him. "Yes, father," he replied; and taking off his hat to cool his forehead, he added modestly, "Several fish were attracted to my line, but nothing serious came of it.

"I had also," he remarked, after a pause, "an enjoyable talk with Mr. Lewis of the Museum."

"Splendid," said Mr. Wutheridge, without enthusiasm.

And he relapsed into silence, from which he presently burst out with:

"Your mother has gone for a walk with your Uncle Ludwig."

"That will be nice for them both," said the professor happily.

"But what about me?" asked his father. "What is there for me to do? Am I simply to sit here, all by myself?"

"I will sit here with you," said the professor.

Mr. Wutheridge gave him a vague look. "Yes," he said; "thank you. But whom am I to talk to?"

("To play with?" thought the professor, startled. "Is that what he means?")

He replied:

"Shall I tell you what Mr. Lewis had to say?"

"Where do you think they are?" demanded Mr. Wutheridge.

"Who are?" asked the professor.

"Matilda, of course," replied Mr. Wutheridge. "And Ludwig."

"They are not by the river," said the professor, "because I just came from there."

"That's something," said his father.

"Perhaps they're in the Museum," suggested the professor.

But that only made Mr. Wutheridge feel worse than ever. "Learning things," he said bitterly.

He hugged his knees. "They could have waited for me," he said.

"But they never consider my feelings.

"Anyhow," he burst out finally, "it's me she's married to, not him, and I won't stand for it."

"What," asked the professor apprehensively, "will you do?"

"You'll see," said his father darkly; "I'll do something."

And he mumbled between his knees,

"She'll be sorry.

"I'll get sick," he declared. "I'll get an illness. I'll go to bed and groan."

"Do you want an illness?" asked the professor, surprised.

"I want her to be sorry," replied Mr. Wutheridge stubbornly.

"Well," said the professor thoughtfully, "I don't think you can get an illness here."

"I know it," said his father gloomily; "I've tried.

"Just the same," he concluded, "I won't have her not paying attention to me. I won't have her going to the Museum with Ludwig, and learning about things, while I stay home. That's not what marriage ought to be, at all. It didn't use to be like that at home. She wouldn't have dared.

"For one thing, I caught colds very easily."

He peered anxiously into his son's face. "You don't think she likes him better than she does me?" he asked.

The professor smiled. "I think she likes you both very much," he replied. "But perhaps——Perhaps, my dear father——

"She would like you even better without a cold."

"No," said Mr. Wutheridge firmly, "no. She was always happiest with me when there was something to take care of. I am sure of it, because I was happiest then, too. Merely having her there, so sweet and capable, looking after me. . . . It was a great temptation to become an invalid. However, I remained healthy, on the whole. A woman feels motherly toward a man, or nothing. I mean, of course, a good woman. It is called the maternal instinct.

"Besides, she ought to like me best, anyhow."

"So?" said the professor. "I was not aware . . ."

And he added simply, "You don't think that perhaps a woman would rather feel something a little less motherly . . . ?"

Mr. Wutheridge looked at him in scorn. "You never married," he remarked.

"That is true," replied the professor. "But I have read the poets."

"So have I," said his father; "I have read Longfellow, Emerson, Tennyson, Whittier, Mrs. Browning, the Rosettis, Bulwer-Lytton, and a young man named Stevenson. Well, what of it? A good woman is a good woman still."

And he quoted nobly,

"'*Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul.*'"

"Yes," said the professor. "Still——"

"You don't think that mother—that a woman would rather have children out of her own body . . . ?"

"I am the one," continued Mr. Wutheridge inexorably, "with whom she ought to go to places like the Museum. Because, after all, I am her husband, and she has certain responsibilities toward me. It was I with whom she lay in bed; it was I she consoled in the dark."

"Excuse me," said the professor hastily, and he got up to go.

"Here," exclaimed his father, "where are you going? Sit down; what do you want to leave me for? You are just like your mother. All right—go; and leave me all alone."

The professor sat down again. "Very well," he said politely; "but let us talk about impersonal things for a while. Did you ever hear of the buried cities of Sumeria, of Lagash, of Akad, and Gish?"

"What a day for a picnic," murmured Mr. Wutheridge, gazing gloomily about him.

"The legend of the flood," continued the professor, "was handed down to the Sumerians, a non-Semitic people, from the Semitic tribes they conquered when they invaded Mesopotamia from the north. The Sumerians, in turn, handed on the legend to the Babylonians who conquered them; and from the Babylonians, the Jews gave it to the world. The Sumerian name for Noah was Uta-Napishtim; and he lived in the city of Shurippah, by the Euphrates."

"Fine," said Mr. Wutheridge. "Splendid. The thing is, one is always being a made a fool of by a woman." He let go of his knees, and sat up. "I'll tell you what we'll do," he exclaimed; "we'll go fishing. When she gets home, we'll both be down by the river, enjoying ourselves, and not here at all."

"But father," expostulated the professor; "I have already been fishing."

"Then," said Mr. Wutheridge enthusiastically, "we'll go to the Museum. Just you and I. I'll show you Noah's Ark in a bottle. A very interesting thing. Come along."

And leaping to his feet, he attempted to pull the professor up after him.

"Hurry," he cried, "or they'll be home again before we get there."

But it was already too late. For at that moment Mrs. Wutheridge and Uncle Ludwig themselves turned in at the gate, and started up the pathway to the house. The lady was in the best of spirits; but the professor thought that Uncle Ludwig looked a little anxious.

"George Herman," cried Mrs. Wutheridge as soon as she caught sight of her son, "did you catch me a fish?"

The professor did not answer; instead, he

turned to look at his father, who had drawn himself up, cold and noble, in the doorway.

"Ah," said Mr. Wutheridge; "so you are home again. Well. Ho."

And he gave them both a frigid bow.

Mrs. Wutheridge regarded her husband with a smile half amused, and half weary. "We had a lovely walk," she said gently; "and Ludwig plucked these anemones for the house."

She held out a little bunch of flowers, the color of the sky. "But I thought," she added, "that they would do better in our room, my love, next to your bed."

Mr. Wutheridge regarded her distantly. "Then you weren't at the Museum?" he asked.

No, they'd simply been walking. . . .

"Walking," he exclaimed with an indignant snort; "and what was I to do, Matilda, while you were walking? Sit here, by myself all

day, with no one to talk to? Walking . . . how do I know you were walking?"

"George," exclaimed Matilda dangerously.

"Oh," cried Uncle Ludwig, "I say . . . remember where you are."

"Well, anyway," mumbled Mr. Wutheridge; "I've had a dashed unpleasant day. I don't feel very well."

"My poor darling," cried Mrs. Wutheridge; "again?"

"Yes," said her husband loftily, "again. But just the same . . ."

"Ludwig," commanded Mrs. Wutheridge, "take these flowers, and put them in water. I'm going to see to it that George lies down. My poor boy. Come, we'll go inside together; and while you rest, I'll tell you of what I was thinking all the time we were walking. Can you guess?"

So saying she smiled at him archly.

Mr. Wutheridge blushed a deep pink. "No," he said; "I cannot." And he followed her into the house.

But on the threshold Mrs. Wutheridge stopped long enough to smile, and to make a little face—was it a wink or a pout—at the professor. Whatever it was, he thought, with a sudden ache in his heart, it was charming—and exactly like a naughty little girl.

But the ache, as he sat quietly by himself on the steps, went on aching, in a small, lonely way. What was it he had said: what was it one looked for in one's mother, from one's father? And from all about . . . friendly company. . . . Where was his father, then, the father everyone had a right to have, no matter how old or how young? The father to look up to, to bring one's troubles to—not the same troubles one brought to one's mother, of course, but graver, manlier troubles, such

as only a father would understand. Lagash, and Thebes . . . Those weren't troubles—but they were things one would want to talk about, naturally . . . Not, oh not one's father's troubles; and such troubles, besides . . .

He sat there for a long time, without moving, listening to the doves, his eyes veiled, his hands in his lap. At last, with a sigh he got up to go in. But just then a little girl with a wide, blue hair ribbon went running down the street, weeping bitterly. "What," he exclaimed, "tears in heaven?" And he ran after her, to console her.

She gazed at him dimly through waters of woe. "I came too soon," she explained. "Next week I'd have been five." Sniffle. "And now I'll never be; I'll only be four-going-on-five forever and ever."

And she made a wef sound with her nose.

The professor nodded his head. "Yes," he

said; "I, too, will never be five. And wouldn't I like to be; because then . . ."

"Then," broke in the little girl eagerly, "you're just grown up enough."

"That's it," agreed the professor: "you're just grown up enough."

Hand in hand, and much more cheerful, they walked down the street together, to see the Noah's Ark.

## CHAPTER 11

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE MEIGGS sat in his tiny room and stared at the motto over his bed: "A Man's Best Friend Is His Mother." He could hear Emma's voice down-stairs in the parlor, and his father's deeper replies; they were laughing together, making happy remarks. He supposed he was glad that his mother was happy—after all the sadness and trouble she'd had in her life. Still, it didn't feel like being glad—not the way he felt it. "What's the matter with me, anyway?" he thought.

Was he lonely? Well, perhaps. But why, my goodness? Wasn't he used to being alone most of his eighteen years? He had no friends to speak of—except his mother. Yes, he'd had

her then—far more, now that he thought of it, during those last few lonely years, when she'd gone, than he'd had her since. That was it: he'd had her once; and now where was she?

She was there, of course—but it wasn't the same any more. She didn't seem to feel like looking after him the way she had once; he knew that, he could tell. It was as though she'd turned away somewhere, and in turning had forgotten something. Only he, William, hadn't turned away; and he hadn't forgotten anything. All he'd been aiming at those eighteen years was to be a good son, and to love the mother who looked after him. If she didn't want to look after him any longer, where was he?

And who would look after him? He couldn't very well do it himself; he never had, he wouldn't know how to begin. It wasn't just

deciding where to go and what to say; it was a spiritual thing, being looked after. He wouldn't know how to do it all by himself. She still told him what to do; but her heart wasn't in it. That was what hurt; and that was how he knew she'd stopped looking after him.

There oughtn't to be mothers, if they were going to stop. You needed something that wasn't going to change, ever. Otherwise, better take care of yourself—if you could. He supposed you could, if you learned. Only, you wouldn't be likely to learn a thing like that up there, where they had Queen Victoria and Mother's Day and all the rules they had on earth, besides.

Look—there was the professor going by down the street, hand in hand with a little girl in a blue hair ribbon. Well, that was a funny one. Hey, Professor—Professor Wutheridge.

He thought he'd go after them; he could

take the little girl with the hair ribbon's other hand, and walk with them, two grown up people and one little girl. . . .

Hey, Professor—wait a minute.

But when he got down-stairs, and looked in the parlor to make sure his mother wouldn't stop him, what he saw made him forget all about the little girl with the hair ribbon.

His father was kissing his mother.

Why should it make him feel so queer in his stomach? He stood there in the doorway with his mouth open; and his knees felt watery. Little girls on a Sunday-school picnic—brothels of shame—little boys' stories told in a whisper . . .

"Excuse me," he breathed and hung his head. He tried to tiptoe backward, to creep out unnoticed. And not to look—not to have to look any more. . . .

But Emma had seen him. Flushed and con-

fused, she pushed Mr. Meiggs away, and stared at her son. "William," she said, "come here."

He shuffled across the room to her, not looking up, seeing only a sort of haze in front of his own feet. "Yes, mother," he mumbled.

Frowning, she smoothed the hair away from his forehead. Then she tipped his face back, to look at him. But what she saw in his eyes, made her drop it again. "Well," she said. "Well——"

And finding herself blushing, she bit her lip.

"Bother," she exclaimed impatiently.

"We were just talking about you, William."

Something inside the boy let out a silent, derisive croak.

"Were you, mother?" he said dully.

Mr. Meiggs stepped back and pulled his mustaches. He felt embarrassed, but he was also enjoying a feeling of satisfaction. At

home, among his friends—largely of the barroom—he liked to be seen kissing a good-looking woman; not that it had come his way very often. All in a spirit of gallantry, however. . . . But a friend was a friend: he wouldn't have wanted his son to stand there looking at it. On the other hand, to embrace his wife, although a pleasure—which was a surprise to him in the first place—was a pure and proper sort of thing to do; and it was time that William saw it that way.

Yes, he thought appreciatively, it was a pleasure to kiss Emma now. The dryness had gone from her embrace; she yielded herself with tender joy, she seemed to like it. That was doubtless because there was nothing sinful in it any longer. He, too, felt tender and happy. The mustaches remained to be pulled in a manly way, but his thoughts were young and innocent. He might have been a boy again.

All the more reason, then, for William to see it, and to find his place which was not—as Mr. Meiggs realized with a swoop of joy—in the first fiddler's seat, but in the second. No more second fiddle for Mr. Meiggs; not he; he had come into his own, he had come into his proper place as Emma's spouse, her love, and her life. And the younger and more joyous she seemed to feel, the more she seemed to want William to stand on his own two feet, and not bother her. Oh, very nice, very nice.

Probably it would be a little hard on William, but what of that? Sons who took a man's lawful wife away from him and made her over into their own mother, couldn't expect the man to feel sorry for them later, when they'd lost her.

And, if she turned back to him now, wasn't it natural? A husband and wife were the right thing for people to be, the only even thing.

Fatherhood, motherhood . . . one went into them, and one came out of them again. Lovers . . . and then a father and mother . . . and in the end, lovers again.

In the end, peacefully . . .

"Yes, sir," he informed William, "you've been elected King of the May."

Well pleased with himself, he took his stand beside his wife, without, however, quite daring to put his arm through hers.

William faced his parents, his head and spirits equally drooping. King of the May . . . what new and horrid thing was that? From under his trembling lashes he cast a glance full of dislike at his father. You leave my mother alone, he thought; go on, leave her alone.

"What does he mean, mother?"

Mrs. Meiggs was vexed; her son's gloomy face troubled her, and she wanted so much not

to be troubled. She wanted to be gay, and all-of-a-piece, as she had been before he came. Why did he always look so miserable; why did he remind her only of her duty toward him? Oh—duty. She disliked him for it. It made her feel irritable. So——

"Do you have to stand right on top of me?" she asked her husband.

That's right, thought William passionately; do you have to stand right on top of her?

"William," she exclaimed, "stop mumbling. Stop looking at your feet. Whatever is the matter with you? It's more than a body can bear."

William looked up obediently. "What do I have to be king for, mother?" he asked.

Mrs. Meiggs told him. "You're to have a crown," she said, "and walk in the parade. All the children will be in it. Mabel Johnson is the queen. You and she can walk together."

"But she's only eleven," cried William in consternation.

"What," said Mrs. Meiggs, "has that got to do with it? She's a sweet, well-behaved girl. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, making it so hard for your mother. You ought to be grateful, instead of doing nothing but make objections."

"I haven't made any," said William in a panic. "Only, couldn't somebody else be king, mother? I don't want to be. Please let somebody else be—please, mother."

Mrs. Meiggs was exasperated. "Why don't you want to be?" she asked. "What's the matter with you? To walk in a parade, with a nice gold crown . . . Can't you do something for your mother, for once, when she asks you? Or do you want me to get down on my knees and beg?"

"I know what it is," said Mr. Meiggs: "he's

too good to walk in a parade, that's what. He fancies himself too high. Wants to be carried in a roll-chair, that's what."

"Be still, Meiggs," said Emma. "When I want your advice, I'll ask for it."

"I was just joking," said Mr. Meiggs.

"I'm too old for a children's parade," cried William.

"Too old," exclaimed his mother, "too old . . . and how old is that, pray? You're not too old to expect your father and me to take care of you. You're not too old to come tagging after me like a sheep wherever I go—till I vow I can't call my soul my own. You're not too old . . ."

"I'm sorry," mumbled William. "I won't any more.

"But not King of the May, mother—please don't make me. . . ."

Mrs. Meiggs stamped her foot. "And I tell

you," she cried, "that you're going to be king, and there's an end to it. You're going to the armory with me to-morrow, and be fitted for a crown. I've worked hard enough for this, and I won't have you spoiling it for me. If you don't want to do it for your own sake, then you'll do it for mine, whether you like it or not."

And pushing past Mr. Meiggs, she stamped out of the house to cool her face in the heavenly air.

"Well," said Mr. Meiggs, looking slyly at William, "you've done it this time, young man. Too old, hey?" And he burst out laughing.

But William crawled up-stairs to his attic room again. His eyes were blurred with tears; something hot and dreadful, like a storm, was getting all ready to burst inside him. It felt like hate and misery; and he couldn't bear it. How dared he feel such a thing? It frightened

him. Think where he was. His glance fell on the motto over his bed; it swam about on the wall.

Mabel Johnson—that little child . . .

"I'm not going to do it," he cried defiantly. "I'm not going to walk with a lot of children."

And suddenly the storm inside him burst. He rushed to the bed, and gave it a kick. "I'm not going to stay here," he cried. "I'm not going to stay here any more, not any more at all. . . .

"You wait and see."

## CHAPTER 12

THE little girl's name was Elizabeth; and she had longed all her life to be five. But pneumonia took her at four-and-a-half. Well, there was nothing to do but make the best of it.

She trotted along, holding on to the professor's hand, and discussing life's ups and downs. "I came here all alone," she said. "My mama and papa aren't here yet." They'd be along soon, she guessed; she could wait. In the meantime she had a doll called Mrs. Og Beezle, because she looked naughty, although she didn't do anything. "She just looks," said Elizabeth. "But she'd be naughty if I let her.

"We could go home to my house," she suggested, "and play. You could be the papa and I could be the mama, and Mrs. Og Beezle could be our child."

"I wonder," said the professor, "if I would care for such a child, who looked naughty, and didn't do anything."

"Well," said Elizabeth thoughtfully, "we could say she did something. We could say . . ."

And reaching up on tiptoe, she whispered in the professor's ear,

"Bzz bzz bzz."

Professor Wutheridge looked shocked. "No," he exclaimed.

"She wouldn't really do it," Elizabeth explained. "It's only make-believe."

"Never," said the professor firmly.

"All right," said Elizabeth.

"What else shall we play?"

"We could play twenty questions," suggested the professor.

"I'll ask first," said Elizabeth quickly, "What's black and white and red all over?"

When the professor had guessed, it was his turn to ask.

"What king of Erech," he asked, "waged a successful war against King Khumbaba?"

"Oh," said Elizabeth, and looked around.

"You don't know," cried the professor accusingly.

"I do too," replied Elizabeth. "Only I don't care to answer."

"Gilgamish," cried the professor.

She gave a skip. "Don't let's play that any more," she said. "Let's play house. I'll be the mama, and you can be my little boy."

The professor looked down at the diminutive figure trotting along at his side. "All right," he said: "let's."

But when he made no further move, she gave a pout. "Why don't you begin?" she asked.

Yes, he thought, why don't I? But how did one begin to be someone's little boy? Wil-

liam would know, because William had been: all his life he'd been Emma Meiggs' William. To belong to someone: how enchanting that was. To be told, George Herman, hadn't you better . . . and wrap yourself warmly . . . and here's a fine eggnog with nutmeg in it, because you look a little thin. . . .

That was only the least part of belonging, he knew. He could guess the rest, the heavenly feelings. Belonging: that meant, first of all, not being alone. It meant more than arms to run to when things went wrong; because not being alone meant being together when things went right, too. It meant sharing things, the good as well as the bad. It meant looking at people with a gentle, whole look, because one wasn't alone—two people, really, were looking out of one face. There are two of us to like you, or to be liked by you: together we make a family.

Was it wrong to want to be a family? Perhaps it was—but everyone did. It meant not having to be proud all by oneself. Look, mother, I've been made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Archæologists. Well, my son, how marvelous of you.

So she was proud of him. And he could go quietly on with his work, while she took care of the medals.

Would you like a trip to Egypt, mother? I could show you where the frogs came up for the Israelites. Of course, my dear son, I'd love it. Leave the trunks to me.

But perhaps a mother wouldn't be interested in frogs, really . . .

Ah, well, that was it, she'd have to be, if she was a mother.

"I think," he said to Elizabeth, "that you'd better begin, just at first."

Elizabeth gave a hop. "Let's play," she said,

"making up names. I'll begin. You're an old beard-in-the-face."

"You," replied the professor, "are a little bow-in-the-hair."

"You're a long white beard-in-the-face," she said earnestly. "You're seventeen and eleven lions and tigers."

And she burst out laughing. "You're nothing but an old dried-up apple skin," she cried.

"Am I really?" thought the professor.

"Perhaps she doesn't like me."

He was unable to make up his mind, because, looking back at the moment, he saw his mother hurrying after them. She arrived with her chin up, and her eyes stormy. "George Herman," she demanded, "where are you going?"

"This is Elizabeth," replied the professor, "and we are going to see the Noah's Ark.

"There is also a dried frog," he added, "which I would like to see."

Mrs. Wutheridge put her arm through his. Then she peeked across his stomach at Elizabeth, walking soberly, with long steps, at his knee.

"Ah," she said. "So you're Elizabeth.

"Well, oughtn't you be going home now, Elizabeth?"

"No, ma'am," said Elizabeth. "I oughtn't."

"Dear me," said Mrs. Wutheridge.

"Elizabeth's mother and father," explained the professor, "haven't come yet."

"Poor Elizabeth," said Mrs. Wutheridge promptly; "then she's all alone."

And she made a pleased sound with her lips, like a smack.

The professor looked at his mother with surprise. Was he mistaken, or did she seem to relish her remark?

"Yes, I am," said Elizabeth. Seeing that no one was looking, she stuck her tongue out at Mrs. Wutheridge.

Then she turned to the professor. "Let's play some more," she said in a wheedling way. "Do you know what you are? You're a . . ."

She had no chance to finish.

"You're a little girl with a dirty face," said Mrs. Wutheridge calmly.

Elizabeth gave a gasp. "I am not," she cried. And she added in tones of mortal enmity,

"You're a dreadful old worm in a bonnet."

"Really," exclaimed the professor, "Elizabeth . . . my dear mother . . . is this quite . . . I mean to say . . ."

"Anyhow," chanted Mrs. Wutheridge, "I haven't got a dirty face!"

Hanging on the professor's arm, she also gave a hop.

"Guess where I was to-day," she said to him.

"But I know where you were," he replied, thoroughly confused; "you were out with Uncle Ludwig. And then you put father to bed. And now . . ."

"Now I want to go down to the river," said Mrs. Wutheridge.

"I can't go down to the river," declared Elizabeth. "They won't let me."

Mrs. Wutheridge made a face. "All right," she said cheerfully. "You can go home, then."

"We were going," said the professor, "to see the Noah's Ark. And there's a dried frog which came up out of the water . . ."

"I don't want to see a frog," insisted Mrs. Wutheridge; "I want to go down to the river."

Elizabeth gave a stamp, lively but small. "I want to see the Noah's Ark," she exclaimed.

"Just the same," declared Mrs. Wutheridge,

"we're going down to the river. So you may as well make up your mind to it."

She held the professor's arm tighter than ever. "Wasn't it funny," she said, "when I came home? There you sat, both of you, so solemn and gloomy. And poor Uncle Ludwig; he was all of a twitter. I love doing things like that."

She looked across at Elizabeth. "You wouldn't know what we were talking about," she said languidly. "We're discussing family affairs."

"I want to see the Noah's Ark," said Elizabeth.

"And anyway," she added, "we were playing together. You didn't have to come along and spoil everything."

At the same time she winked away a tear.

Mrs. Wutheridge looked at her coldly, across the professor's stomach. "You can't play with

him," she said, "if I don't want you to, because he belongs to me. You're just a little-nothing-at-all, and if you had any sense, you'd run away home, and not bother us any more."

"Oh," breathed Elizabeth. "Ow," said she.

And with a howl she burst into tears.

The professor gazed after her retreating figure in dismay. Then he glanced at his mother; she was smiling.

"Oh, my," he said.

Shaking his head, he gave her a look full of reproach. "You hurt the child's feelings," he said.

Mrs. Wutheridge nodded gaily. "Yes," she admitted; "why not? There's only room for me. I don't want other little children playing with you."

*Other* little children, thought the professor . . . ?

All at once her mood changed. "Now come,"

she said gravely; "tell me: what am I to do with those two at home? They're so jealous of each other; and it's all so silly."

With that, she gave the sky an arch look.

But the professor gazed at her gloomily. "Tell me the truth," he said; "admit that you like it."

"I suppose I do," she replied. "But it's only in fun. Anyone can see that. After all, I am a wife and a mother."

"Are you?" asked the professor doubtfully.

"You do not seem like a mother to me."

"Don't be tiresome, George Herman," said Mrs. Wutheridge coldly. "I asked you to tell me what to do, not to insult me."

"But that," said the professor drawing himself up, "is just the trouble: I'm not sure that I know what to tell you. And what is more, I'm not at all sure that I care. At the moment, it seems to me that I am more inter-

ested in the dried frog at the Museum. I was going to show it to Elizabeth."

He added thoughtfully,

"She would have enjoyed seeing it, I think."

Mrs. Wutheridge let go his arm, and stood still. "Oh," she exclaimed, "you are tiresome, after all. You're like your father all over again; always wanting to do things I don't want to do. . . .

"Well . . . go to your dried frog, then."

And with a toss of her head, she turned back to the house.

The professor looked after her sadly. "Now," he thought, "I've vexed my mother."

But even as he spoke, his face assumed a doubtful expression.

"My mother?" he thought. "Why do I say that?

"I have no mother or father here. I am an old man with a beard; and they would all like

to be my children. How lonely that is for me.

"Why do I stay here, I wonder?"

And with slow steps, and in a thoughtful way, he turned in the direction of the river, to stand for a long time looking out across its moving waters.

## CHAPTER 13

Mrs. Crisp had great hopes of Mr. Lewis. She could not exactly express them; and she did not intend to love him. Nevertheless, she felt giddy when she thought about him.

In the first place, there he was, right under her nose, forever and ever. Like her husband, of course—but she knew her husband by heart. There wasn't very much to know, when you came right down to it; and as for what there was, all she could do was to sit still, and look at it. Mr. Lewis, on the other hand, would take a bit of finding out; she thought that she might move a little, in the finding. She felt a sweet stir at the thought.

To move—to live, to grow, to put out branches like a tree, leaves, even, maybe . . .

Not to be winter-locked any more, with nothing moving, nothing even stirring ever so faintly, anywhere. . . .

To grow . . . ? What a thought—at her age.

Still, there it was. It didn't feel like growing, exactly; it felt like curiosity. Finding out . . . what she'd missed, perhaps, for one thing . . . that is, supposing she'd missed anything, actually.

Well, she'd ask, now, and find out.

They went together on Mother's Day to admire the parade. As they walked down the street, among other couples also moving in that direction, she said to him:

"I wonder that you don't miss your wife more, Mr. Lewis."

"No, ma'am," replied Mr. Lewis, "I can't say I do. Seeing," he added, "that she died before me, and in the arms, you might say, of

another man—which is one reason, I suppose, why she isn't here; one, that is."

"Oh, dear," said Mrs. Crisp. "Oh, dearie me."

"No," said Mr. Lewis firmly, "I don't miss her. What I miss is Jesus and the angels."

"Yes," said Mrs. Crisp; "that's a queer one."

"And I mean," continued Mr. Lewis, "to find them, before I'm done."

"In another man's arms," murmured Mrs. Crisp dreamily. "I suppose people are like that, after all.

"Not that it matters to me, of course," she added.

"What a time of it you've had, by and large." And she took hold of his elbow through the crowd.

Mr. Lewis did not notice her.

"If He isn't here," he said, "where is He?"

Mrs. Crisp shook his arm. "Dear me," she said; "are you always thinking about religious things?"

"What else should I think about?" demanded Mr. Lewis with some asperity.

"You could think about your wife," suggested Mrs. Crisp.

Mr. Lewis demanded to know if that was what he had come to heaven for.

"You came," said Mrs. Crisp, "to get out of roasting in hell-fire, that's what. And for the glory of His Kingdom," she added, a little irrelevantly.

"So then," said Mr. Lewis, "I should think of what goes on between husbands and wives? Don't be foolish."

She gazed up at him innocently. "Isn't it all the same?" she asked. "What's marriage for, but the glory of God. And what's the Church for, but to get you into heaven?"

"Is it?" said Mr. Lewis.

"Well, you're here, aren't you?" asked Mrs. Crisp.

"And so am I," she added.

"Hum," said Mr. Lewis.

"If you didn't want to come," said Mrs. Crisp coldly, "why didn't you stay Jewish?"

"I wanted love," said Mr. Lewis. "And Jews don't get it."

Mrs. Crisp nestled closer to his arm. "There," she said; "didn't I tell you? Love."

"No," said Mr. Lewis firmly, "not love, not like that—not like what goes on between men and women. What I mean is love—that's something else again. Like what you'd feel inside your soul for something beautiful you couldn't quite get hold of. Like what you'd feel for goodness.

"Like what you'd feel for God."

"It's all the same," said Mrs. Crisp.

Mr. Lewis looked at her sternly. "Do you believe that?" he asked.

"I was taught it," she answered; and her face took on a stubborn expression.

"Well," said Mr. Lewis, "I wasn't. I was taught that God's goodness was far away, like something you couldn't reach to; but if He felt like it, He'd forgive you. Does it matter if you're happy? Not so long as you behave yourself. There's no way out of that for a Jew, because God never promised them anything. Does he say to a Jew, come to me, all ye weary laden, and I will give you rest? For forty years the Jews lived in the desert, looking for a home. When they found it, He took it away again. And what does your church do? It makes a home up here, for dead people. Well—heaven or Jerusalem, what's the difference? It's all the same; God's love is still far away, like something you couldn't reach to.

God's love—it should make you feel new, and ready to split with happiness. It should be for the living; because they are the ones that need it. It should be close at hand, where you could touch it; in your heart, where you could feel it."

"Well, just the same," Mrs. Crisp insisted, "it's peaceful here." And she quoted: " 'Jerusalem the golden, with milk and honey blest. Beneath thy contemplation, sink heart and mind oppressed.' "

"And that's heaven enough for you?" asked Mr. Lewis.

"It's heaven, anyway," replied Mrs. Crisp. "And whether it's enough or not, don't hardly signify.

"Because," she added cheerfully, "whatever comes, I'm saved."

## CHAPTER 14

By this time they had come to the square, where a crowd of people was already gathered, composed of the mothers and fathers, aunts, uncles, and ancestors of the children chosen to march in the parade. Worming their way to the front, Mr. Lewis and Mrs. Crisp found themselves facing the Museum, on whose porch, garlanded with flowers, sat the committee, headed by the curator. Doctor Crisp's glance was sober, but tender, fitting to the occasion, which everyone recognized to be of the first importance.

Soon the talk among the parents ceased, and all necks were craned in the direction of the river, from which the steady thumping of a band began to make itself heard. The com-

mittee on the porch stood up to look; the crowd rustled, exclamations were heard, and several ladies, standing on their toes, or bending forward, bumped against their neighbors, who received the bump with good nature.

"Here they come," said Mrs. Crisp.

As she spoke, two elderly gentlemen, dressed in white, appeared on the street, marching soberly forward, and pushing in front of them long-handled brooms. They were followed by the parade itself, led by the band, composed entirely of orphans. Elizabeth marched in the band; she held a harp, which she plucked from time to time, but seeing that she walked between a trumpet and a drum, her contribution to the music was almost inaudible. Nevertheless she kept glancing from side to side, to see if the professor was there, as she wished to be noticed.

Behind the band, when the parade start-

ed, was William Wilberforce Meiggs, wearing a gold crown, and beside him Mabel Johnson, also with a crown. The king and queen were stationed beneath a sort of canopy, covered with roses, and upheld by pages.

The progress of this unit was necessarily slow; and since the children were all of them anxious to arrive at the Museum well up in the parade, so as to see their parents and be seen by them in turn, the older ones, who had been placed in the rear, soon forged to the front, jostling and upsetting the very small ones, whose prostrate bodies remained sunk in dejection along the march, while giving voice to their grief. These hardier children, once under way, had no intention of stopping for the royal canopy, but pushed on regardless; with the result that the band arrived first, the older children second, and the royal pair in the rear, followed by the babies, many of

whom preferred, however, to sit down on the curb and gaze at the spectators, or to try to eat the flowers they carried.

As soon as the parade had come to a halt in front of the Museum, the Reverend Crisp arose from his seat. "My friends," he intoned in a deep voice, "my brethren: This is indeed a happy, happy day. For it is the day on which the son remembers and reveres his mother. Who amongst us has not sat at the knee of a good and gentle woman, and gazing up into that loving face, shining with tenderness, learnt the first articles of faith? Who amongst us, I say, has not gone to that comforting and comfortable lap, there to weep out his childish sorrows. And later, in manhood's busy season, who has never turned back to that remembered haven, for forgiveness and understanding?"

"I have a friend here," said Elizabeth to the

drummer. "Do you see somebody with a long white beard anywhere?"

"Everywhere," said the drummer.

"Oh," said Elizabeth, "you're so provoking."

"You're no great beauty yourself," replied the drummer.

"But," boomed Doctor Crisp, "a mother's love is not a selfish love. No, my friends, no, my brethren: there is no element of selfishness in a mother's pure love for her child. The word I think of more than any other in this connection, is the great word, the mystic word, sacrifice. I am reminded of a story told of one of our missionaries—a father, this time, but nonetheless, a parent. This devout man, hemmed in during an uprising in China, is said to have exclaimed just before he was killed: 'When you take the news back to America of my death, tell them that my final message was

that when my boy is twenty-five years old, I want him to come here to China as a missionary.' How great a spirit to give birth to so great a vision. And what a consoling message for the young man. When Mrs. Adoniram Judson was about to bid her children farewell upon the ship in Burma, as they were leaving her in order to return to America to be educated, she took them in her arms one after the other, covered them with kisses, and raising her tear-laden eyes, exclaimed, 'I do this for the sake of Burma and Jesus Christ my Savior.' Oh, that we too may feel the greatness of that vision today."

"Eh," said Mr. Lewis, "what's that about Jesus?"

"Nothing," said Mrs. Crisp. "It was about Mrs. Adoniram Judson."

Under the canopy covered with roses, and held at a rakish tilt by the four weary canopy-

bearers, the queen shyly took the king's hand. "Isn't that beautiful," she breathed. "Don't you love it?"

King William withdrew his hand. "Love it?" he said; "what would I love it for? She got rid of them, didn't she? They went home, and she stayed in Burma. All that about mothers and fathers; it makes me sick. People do what they want; it hurts them sometimes, but they do it, and the groans don't count.

"I'm going to get out of this. You wait and see."

"Let us now," cried Doctor Crisp, "rise and pay tribute to our own Mrs. Emma Meiggs, who is here to-day as the representative of all of us, and as the symbol of that eternal good, that endless joy, that priceless boon—motherhood."

At this he stepped aside, the door of the Museum opened, and a number of ladies ap-

peared, representing the different reformed countries. These took their places, making way for Mrs. Meiggs, who came hurrying through the doorway while the band played, wearing a large gold crown, and carrying a bouquet of roses and lilies-of-the-valley in her arm.

"Ho," said Mrs. Crisp; "so that's it. Well, she don't look so handsome as all that, to my way of thinking, if you want to know."

And she added, under her breath,

"Anyway, whatever comes, I'm saved."

Mr. Meiggs in the forefront of the crowd, raised a mild cheer; the spectators sang "Rock of Ages, cleft for me"; and Mrs. Meiggs posed in the doorway.

"Go on," said Elizabeth to the drummer; "don't be so mean. You're bigger than I am. Look around a little. He has a long white beard."

"Stop bothering me, will you?" cried the

drummer. "Can't a person have any peace around here?"

Mr. Lewis stood in the clear light of paradise. Before him were grouped the children who, being baptized, and having died before they could any of them commit a cardinal sin, had been saved; beyond them, on the porch, stood the committee of the righteous, Doctor Crisp, the ladies representing the reformed countries, and Mrs. Meiggs with her arms full of flowers. A little in front of him was William, his eyes smarting with bitter and childish tears; and all about him the parents nodded their heads, gazed at their own children, whispered, and blew their noses.

The little darlings.

Bless their innocent little hearts.

A fine looking woman, that.

Yes, sir, a real mother.

So, reflected Mr. Lewis: whatever comes, she's saved. Well, now—what does that mean,

saved? What did she gain; or what did she lose?

What she gained is right here under our noses: peace, and her own righteousness forever and ever. No more pain, no more terror, no more growing old, and dying; bread and milk, and honey if she wants it; Doctor Crisp, the Museum, the company of the blessed, without sin—or anyhow without much sin. . . .

What did she lose? Well, for one thing, she lost her life: you don't need eyes to see that. Fifty years without joy—that's what I mean. Fifty years of bearing with something she didn't like, so that she could come here. Fifty years of starving herself, her heart and her mind.

So now I look for Jesus here, with this starved woman. Was He interested in starving? Go away. Then why did He feed the multitudes on the shores of Galilee?

Why did He say, I am the Bread of Life?

I am not come to destroy, He said, but to fulfil. Let the dead bury their dead, for God is not God of the dead, but of the living.

All the same, life is not easy to find—not even on earth. Death is easy—everyone finds death. But life? Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

And if you don't find it—what does He say? Ye are the salt of the earth, but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace.

*Have salt in yourselves.*

Doctor Crisp raised his hands. "Let us pray," he said.

Why, that's a way to live, thought Mr. Lewis, to have salt in yourself. What has that to do with death?

His heart beat; he looked at Mrs. Crisp with wide-open, shocked eyes. "Mrs. Crisp,"

he exclaimed, "Mrs. Crisp—I know where He is."

"Eh?" said Mrs. Crisp. "Where who is?"

Mr. Lewis did not answer her. "He's home," he cried. "He's home, where I came from—down there—on earth. He's been there all the time.

"Then what am I doing here?"

And turning on his heel he pushed his way wildly through the crowd, in the direction of the city.

Once clear of the crowd, Mr. Lewis moved with more deliberation. He was in a hurry, but there was time, still, for what he had to do. He went home. There he gathered together his collection of gold pieces.

There's no use taking them, he thought. Sooner shall a camel go through the eye of a needle than a rich man shall enter the kingdom of heaven.

I shall leave them to the poor.

And seizing a pen, he wrote out a last will and testament: I hereby bequeath my collection of gold pieces to the Museum, to be known forever as the Samuel Lewis Collection.

The will did not entirely please him; but he did not know why.

He left the house, and walked rapidly to the river. There he stood for a moment on the bank, admiring the warm light, breathing in the air perfumed with cinnamon and lilies. Behind him he heard the singing in the square, the faint thump of the drum, the light tuneless voices of the children. His heart contracted with sudden anguish; all at once a desperate fear took hold of him. The river stretched dark and broad before him; was that a mist on the opposite bank? He could not see very clearly. What if there were no other shore? What if terrible sea-monsters waited

in those somber depths? What if dreadful whirlpools sang in those bitter currents?

He looked behind him; for the last time the light shone on the narrow houses, the orderly gardens gave up the incense of flowers. He took a last deep breath. "Yes," he said, "it's pretty here."

Faint with terror, he flung himself into the water.

## CHAPTER 15

At once a mortal chill bit through his bones, and his heart melted. It seemed to him that he no longer breathed; yet he struggled. He wished to turn back, but there was no longer any direction; there was only forward. In the icy darkness, strange creatures without form floated at his side; they spoke to him. "Samuel," they said, "do you remember your childhood? Think back a little. What was it you wanted? Love?"

"I have forgotten," said Mr. Lewis. "But perhaps it was love."

"Why, then," asked the voices, "did you run away from those who loved you? Were you ashamed of them, Samuel? They were hurt so easily. They fought with no one; when

they were offended, they simply sat and wept."

But Mr. Lewis had forgotten.

"You were afraid," said the voices sadly. "You were afraid that you would be like them."

"Aï," said Mr. Lewis.

"You were afraid of such terrible meekness," the voices said. "Think back, Samuel: you are a child again. Who is that standing there with the pale face, and the dark eyes full of pain? That is your father, Isaac Levy. He has just been insulted; and those he loves have been insulted with him. What does he do? Nothing. He wrings his hands."

"I have forgotten," said Mr. Lewis.

The grave voices went on: "Your young heart breaks with sadness and with anger. You will not let people insult you, or those you love.

"What will you do? You will run away, you

will be different, you will be strong and terrible. But you do not run away—not then—not yet."

"Forgotten," moaned Mr. Lewis. "All forgotten."

"Love is what you want," said the voices. "Your heart cries out for love. And he loves you, your pale sad father; but he makes you ashamed. No, you will not love him, it is too painful for you. You will have nothing to do with him."

"I have forgotten," whispered Mr. Lewis.

He was lost, there was neither heaven nor earth, he was naked and cold, without love, without hope, without father or mother. "I had forgotten," he said. The voices went on inexorably,

"I am the Bread of Life; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abun-

dance; but from him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath.

"What has a man more than his life?

"Sammy, you were afraid to love, for you were ashamed of those who loved you. And love was taken away from you . . . even the little that you had.

"You were afraid to live."

Mr. Lewis struggled on through the icy waters, drowned in darkness. This is death, he thought; this is annihilation. There is no other shore. The voices of his strange companions grew closer and more urgent. They reminded him of something—something far away, something he remembered.

"Sammy," they said, "see, now, why were you afraid? Were you afraid that people would hurt you, too; and that you would only sit and weep?"

"Yes," said Mr. Lewis. "I was afraid.

"I was afraid to be a Jew, like my father."

How sweetly, then, the voices replied:

"Ah, Sammy, you did not have to weep because your father wept.

"You had your own salt, even then. Didn't you know that, Sammy?

"You had your own savor."

The dark waters seemed to grow lighter; he could feel his body again, he could feel his limbs and muscles, he breathed, he took in breath. "Look," said the voices: "there is your home again, as it used to be. Now it is Friday evening, and the candles are lighted. Who is that sitting there in the corner, all by himself? That is you, Sammy. Look at yourself: should you be ashamed of what you see? You were a child, like anybody. You were a little tree growing, your roots were in good dust, in rich and noble dust. But all the time you were you, you were not the dust, you were

the tree. You could have been a hero, even. Do you remember the little boy you played with one summer in the country—what was his name? Isidore. He was killed in the war; he was a hero, Sammy. And the little girl who kissed you so sweetly, in the old garden, behind her house . . . those eyes were the eyes of a Jewess, Sammy. Like your mother's."

"I remember," whispered Mr. Lewis.

A single current of hope seemed to warm the bitter waters. Perhaps . . . perhaps there was another shore. . . .

He swam more strongly; he could no longer see his pale companions, the deep blue water hid them, but their voices floated about him, strong and sweet, reviving, reassuring:

Remember . . . remember . . .
Why were you ashamed?
Why were you afraid?
Oh, I remember . . .

Why was I afraid?

Why ashamed?

See, father, I am not afraid any more. I can even pity you, now; I am sorry for you, that is all. You were you, and I was I; but I was afraid I would be you all over again. Well, I am simply myself now. A man, a Jew—what does it matter? What did it ever matter? To live, that is what matters; to be myself again. I did not have to weep because you wept. I did not have to be afraid of you. I did not have to run away from you. I could have loved you.

I can love you now.

I have my own salt. I have my own savor.

I have always had it.

The water grew shallow; his legs touched bottom; and with all his strength he waded ashore. It was still dark, but there was enough light to make out the road. How new he felt, how young and light and free; joy seemed

ready to burst in his heart. He set off swiftly, without a single glance behind. He was in such a hurry. . . .

In the dim light two figures appeared on the road before him, also walking in his direction. One of them was a young man, wearing a paper crown; and the other was an old man with a long white beard. But he hurried by.

"Who are you?" they cried after him.

"Hey—wait a minute."

He shouted back to them: "My name is Levy. I am on my way home, to meet a Friend."

Their voices followed him faintly. "What do you want so much," they cried, "that you rush by in this manner?

"What has He got for you?"

"The Bread of Life," answered Mr. Lewis joyously. "The Bread of Life."

THE END

*"For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.*

*"If any man have ears to hear, let him hear."*